

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER 1915.

HATE.

In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility :
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger ;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect ;
Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide,
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height ! On, on, you noblest English.

Henry V. Act iii. sc. 1.

THERE has recently been an extraordinary recrudescence of hatred throughout what we used to think was the civilised world. The active and patent stock of hatred in humanity has never been constant, it ebbs from time to time and then wells up again. The immobilised, the potential stock is, however, limitless. Indications indeed are not wanting that hatred has in historical times lessened both in quality and in quantity. In the magnificent Psalm of David (cxxxix.) the author critically examines whether he is a sufficiently perfect hater : whether he really hates in the true spirit set forth so eloquently in Psalm cix. But as we pass from the Old Testament to the New Testament, we notice a steady falling off in hatred. In classical times, too, people hated strongly and well, and as every reader of Dante recognises—'Dante who loved well because he hated'—there was little falling off in this emotion during what are called the Middle Ages. Indeed, the Italian genius for hatred is still maintained in the bitter local jealousies in neighbouring villages perhaps as well as anywhere else in the world ; but readers of 'Wuthering Heights' or of the 'Green Graves of Blairgowrie' will recognise that the existence of intense and local hatred is not confined to Italian villages.

Another example of hatred, concentrated, organised, official, religious hatred is the curse formally placed on Spinoza in 1656 in Holland, issued by the Jewish congregation and in the Portuguese tongue :

'With the judgment of the angels and of the saints we
VOL. XXXIX.—NO. 231, N.S.

excommunicate, cut off, curse, and anathematise Baruch de Espinoza, with the consent of the elders and of all this holy congregation, in the presence of the holy books: by the 613 precepts which are written therein, with the anathema wherewith Joshua cursed Jericho, with the curse which Elisha laid upon the children, and with all the curses which are written in the law. Cursed be he by day and cursed be he by night. Cursed be he in sleeping and cursed be he in waking, cursed in going out and cursed in coming in. The Lord shall not pardon him, the wrath and fury of the Lord shall henceforth be kindled against this man, and shall lay upon him all the curses which are written in the book of the law. The Lord shall destroy his name under the sun, and cut him off for his undoing from all the tribes of Israel, with all the curses of the firmament which are written in the book of the law. But ye that cleave unto the Lord your God, live all of you this day.'

The curse¹ recorded by Ernulphus (Bishop of Rochester, 1114-1124) is even more comprehensive, but yet listen to what my uncle Toby said some centuries later about it:—'I declare,' quoth my uncle Toby, 'my heart would not let me curse the devil himself with so much bitterness.' 'He is the father of curses,' replied Dr. Slop. 'So am not I,' replied my uncle. 'But he is cursed and damn'd already to all eternity,' replied Dr. Slop. 'I am sorry for it,' quoth my uncle Toby.

That on the whole hatred was until recently thought to be diminishing in quantity and perhaps in quality is shown by the fact that in 'A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles,' edited by Sir James Murray, and published at Oxford, 1901, hate is defined as 'an emotion of extreme dislike or aversion; detestation; abhorrence, hatred. Now chiefly *poet.*' This last fragment of a word—the italics are in the original—reminds one that in 1832 Shelley wrote 'Why is it that we all write love-songs? Why shouldn't we write hate-songs?' and the Germans have recently written hate-songs, or at any rate revived them:

un fiore
per l'amore,
o per odio una saetta.

CARDUCCI.

Nobody seems to have defined Hate very concisely. There are a whole series of emotions in which it has its origin and with which it is so bound up that it is very difficult to disentangle them. 'You cannot unscramble an egg,' as Mr. Pierpont Morgan assured us,

¹ See Hearn's edition of the *Textus Roffensis* (Oxford: 1720), p. 55.

and it is almost as difficult to disintegrate the divergent and at times discordant factors which end in hate. Could we do so we should find some factors temporary and others lasting.

If you stand on the bridge at Grantchester and watch the river tumbling 'Under the mill, Under the mill,' you notice ridges and swirls of water which appear permanent and have for a time an individuality of their own. They stand above the general level and race forward. But in the course of a few hundred yards these temporary entities have disappeared, and combined and fused into a placid, deep, and steady stream flowing irresistibly onwards. Thus it seems to be with hatred, composed of many strands, many apparently distinct streams, such as anger, fear, terror, despair, humiliation, dislike, indignation, contempt; many temporary, many passing—one might almost enumerate the names of half Miss Flite's birds—yet all these, for the most part, fleeting passions ultimately merge into a steady and persistent hatred which will seldom or never be appeased.

As Bain has pointed out, Hatred is an apparently permanent affection, grounded on anger and other emotions which in the main are transitory. Some wrong never mended, some standing attempt to harm another, are amongst the frequent causes which fan the flame of hate. To certain dispositions hatred is by no means unpleasant: in fact it becomes at times a pleasurable sensation; but to be a really satisfactory hater one must not only be irascible by nature, but be placed in some more or less frequent relationship with the object of the hatred. It is harder for a citizen of Southampton to hate a dweller in Saskatchewan or Saghalien than to hate a fellow-citizen who lives just round the corner. Rivalry, the forced submission to an unwelcome authority, unequal conditions of life perpetuate the emotions of hatred, which are often accentuated and fanned by party and sectarian feeling. Now most people take a certain and often a deep interest in religious and social affairs, and the fact that different views on these ethical subjects engender and maintain hatred shows that to a certain extent the passion is a congenial one to man. An involuntary offence may cause anger which is quickly appeased by an adequate apology; but when the involuntary offence is due to careless and complete disregard of the interest and feelings of others it is less easily put right, and the offended person feels himself less under an obligation to suppress his anger. The same also is true when the offender, well acquainted with our feelings of resentment and our consciousness of the harm, which we at any rate think, he is inflicting

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upon us, declines to alter a course of action tending to promote his own interest in entire disregard of our feelings or interest. And again, to quote Bain, 'the fourth and highest species of wrong is the case of deliberate and intended offence . . . This opens before us such a state of mind, such a range of possible damage, that our angry senses are deeply moved, and call for vengeance.'

We must not forget that hatred is by no means always or entirely a bad passion. Hatred of evil, hatred of wrong-doing may promote the progress of the world, but on the whole hatred is a passion which dulls the intellect and in the long run weakens the individual. Still there is such a thing as noble rage.

At first sight one is rather inclined to associate hatred with want of education, and a general lack of cultivation, but in certain of its phases this is by no means true. Nothing is more astonishing than the bitterness that divergent political views produce. This is especially shown at times of 'party' activity, such as a general election. The late Bishop Creighton wrote :

'I am convinced that every time the moral and cultivated man exercises his right to vote, he seriously impairs his morality and his culture. The wrath one feels against opponents, the contempt for their intelligence, and the doubt about their honesty—this destroys that charity which is the highest aim of morality ; while, on the other hand, the necessity of stating your views broadly, of making up your mind decidedly, of urging all kinds of argument on others which you only half believe, intellectually speaking, yourself—this destroys true culture and robs of half its bloom.'

Since the beginning of the War I have met men whose reputations are world-wide, humane, kindly professors, who have probably never in their long lives killed anything more dangerous than a house-fly, men who have had reputations for fairness and justness which might have made them judges, yet they have stated that they would gladly assist in hanging a fellow-creature who owned certain newspapers, the views of which fail to accord with their own, and yet a man they had never met and could not have known. Religious hatred is equally bitter and equally to be regretted.

'GR-R-R—there, go, my heart's abhorrence !
Water your damned flower-pots, do !
If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
God's blood, would not mine kill you ?'

How far hatred is effective in war-time, and how far it can be effectively worked up by systematic effort, is difficult to say. I don't honestly think it can be effectively exploited with our British troops. An officer recently visited one of our trenches where some German prisoners were, and at an hour when a 'sing-song' was in full swing was pleased to hear the Sergeant in the chair announcing 'Item No. 4. Mister Fritz and Mister Moritz will now oblige with "The 'ymn of 'ate."''

On the other hand, Le Bon felt that hatred played a very large part in the varying events of the French Revolution. The hatred of persons, of institutions or of things, was, at that epoch, by no means confined to the detestation of the mutually opposing parties. The leading men of the Revolution detested not only their enemies, but the members of their own party. During the last years of the eighteenth century there was a great outpouring of hate, especially in France. The leaders believed so implicitly in themselves that they could not tolerate the existence of others who differed but in a hair's-breadth from their views.

Commandant Colin, professor at the College of War, states :

'In war more than at any other time there is no better inspiring force than hatred ; it was hatred that made Blücher victorious over Napoleon. Analyse the most wonderful manœuvres, the most decisive operations, and if they are not the work of an exceptional man, a Frederick or a Napoleon, you will find they are inspired by passion more than by calculation. What would the war of 1870 have been without the hatred which we bore the Germans ?'

We have but two comments on this quotation : (1) Wellington seems to have been overlooked. (2) What *was* the war of 1870 even with the hatred the French bore the Germans !

Le Bon points out that Commandant Colin might have added that intense hatred of the Japanese for the Russians should be classed amongst the causes of their success. The tolerant and ignorant Russians, unaware for the most part even of the existence of the Japanese, felt no anger against them and thus fought with comparatively little enthusiasm. But the Russians, at any rate the Russians of this War, do know of the existence of the Germans.

Sooner or later hatred manifests itself in a state of rage, and in rage we find the symptoms of hatred, concentrated, condensed, and thus more easily analysed. I now propose to deal with the physiological conditions which accompany rage, and indeed perhaps

produce this paroxysm, and I do not hesitate to begin by quoting Charles Darwin's classical description of this passion, which has never been equalled :

'Rage exhibits itself in the most diversified manner. The heart and circulation are always affected ; the face reddens or becomes purple, with the veins on the forehead and neck distended. The reddening of the skin has been observed with the copper-coloured Indians of South America, and even, as it is said, on the white cicatrices left by old wounds on negroes. Monkeys also redden from passion. With one of my own infants, under four months old, I repeatedly observed that the first symptom of an approaching passion was the rushing of the blood into his bare scalp. On the other hand, the action of the heart is sometimes so much impeded by great rage that the countenance becomes pallid or livid, and not a few men with heart-disease have dropped down dead under this powerful motion.

'The respiration is likewise affected ; the chest heaves and the dilated nostrils quiver. As Tennyson writes, "sharp breaths of anger puffed her fairy nostrils out." Hence we have such expressions as "breathing out vengeance," "fuming with anger."

'The excited brain gives strength to the muscles, and at the same time energy to the will. The body is commonly held erect ready for instant action, but sometimes it is bent forward towards the offending person, with the limbs more or less rigid. The mouth is generally closed with firmness, showing fixed determination, and the teeth are clenched or ground together. Such gestures as the raising of the arms, with the fist clenched, as if to strike the offender, are common. Few men in a great passion, and telling someone to be gone, can resist acting as if they intended to strike or push the man violently away. The desire, indeed, to strike often becomes so intolerably strong that inanimate objects are struck or dashed to the ground ; but gestures frequently become altogether purposeless or frantic. Young children, when in a violent rage, roll on the ground on their backs or bellies, screaming, kicking, scratching, or biting everything within reach. So it is, as I hear from Mr. Scott, with Hindoo children ; and, as we have seen, with the young of the anthropomorphous apes.

'But the muscular system is often affected in a wholly different way ; for trembling is a frequent consequence of extreme rage. The paralysed lips then refuse to obey the will, "and the voice sticks in the throat," or it is rendered

loud, harsh, and discordant. If there be much and rapid speaking, the mouth froths. The hair sometimes bristles. . . . There is in most cases a strongly-marked frown on the forehead ; for this follows from the sense of anything displeasing or difficult, together with concentration of mind. But sometimes the brow, instead of being much contracted and lowered, remains smooth, with the glaring eyes kept widely open. The eyes are always bright, or may, as Homer expresses it, be like a blazing fire. They are sometimes bloodshot, and are said to protrude from their sockets—the result, no doubt, of the head being gorged with blood, as shown by the veins being distended. According to Gratiolet, the pupils are always contracted in rage, and I hear from Dr. Crichton-Browne that this is the case in the fierce delirium of meningitis ; but the movements of the iris under the influence of the different emotions is a very obscure subject.'

Tasso thus describes the rage of Argante :

'Tacque ; e'l Pagano, al sofferir poco uso,
Morde le labbra, e di furor si strugge.
Risponder vuol, ma 'l suono esce confuso,
Siccome strido d' animal che rugge :
O come apre le nubi, ond' egli è chiuso,
Impetuoso il fulmine, e sen fugge ;
Così pareva a forza ogni suo detto
Tonando uscir dall' infiammato petto.'

Cant. vi. 38.

and Ariosto tells :

'Trema 'l cor dentro, e treman fuor la labbia,
Non può la lingua disnodar parola,
La bocca ha amara e par che toscò v' habbia.'

Orl. Fur. xlii. 41.

and again :

'E per l' ossa un tremor freddo gli scorre, . . .
Con cor trafitto, e con pallida faccia,
E con voce tremante, e bocca amara.'

Orl. Fur. v. 40, 41.

The description of the Fifth Circle of Dante's Hell deals with *Iracondi*, 'the souls of those whom anger overcame.'

In Purgatory, again, in the Third Circle those who expiate the sin of wrath are wrapped around in a dim, pungent smoke, which recalls the German gases ; this, as Professor Toynbee says, 'blinds them as they had been blinded on earth by their angry passions.' There were no respirators in Dante's Purgatory.

Finally, William James, in his 'Principles of Psychology,' quotes the following description of hatred from Mantegazza:

'Withdrawal of the head backwards, withdrawal of the trunk; projection forwards of the hands, as if to defend one's self against the hated object; contraction or closure of the eyes; elevation of the upper lip and closure of the nose,—these are all elementary movements of turning away. Next threatening movements, as: intense frowning; eyes wide open; display of teeth; grinding teeth and contracting jaws; opened mouth with tongue advanced; clenched fists; threatening action of arms; stamping with the feet; deep inspirations—panting; growling and various cries; automatic repetition of one word or syllable; sudden weakness and trembling of voice; spitting. Finally, various miscellaneous reactions and vaso-motor symptoms; general trembling, convulsions of lips and facial muscles, of limbs and of trunk; acts of violence to one's self, as biting fist or nails; sardonic laughter; bright redness of face; sudden pallor of face; extreme dilatation of nostrils; standing up of hair on head.'

James considers, in his chapter on Emotions, the reactions which are characteristics of but three sets of feeling—grief, fear, and hatred. Whilst declining to enlarge his list, he points out that should he do so he would but ring the changes on the physiological elements with which these three typical cases are involved, the rigidity of certain muscles, relaxation of others, constrictions of some arteries, loosening of others, variations and irregularities of the respiration, increasing or lowering of the pulse-beat, certain glands secreting whilst others dry up. Thus he generalises on the more special and detailed records of Darwin and Mantegazza.

Before leaving a description of the human face animated by Hatred, we must not omit to draw attention to the researches of the brilliant Canadian sculptor, Tait Mackenzie, now Professor of Physical Culture at the University of Pennsylvania. He had made a profound study of the expression of the emotions in violent exercise, partly from photographs, but largely by personal observation. His skill as a sculptor has enabled him to prepare a series of masks of the face showing the various stages of exhaustion or fatigue which accompany violent physical exercise. We need only deal with one such mask, that of a competitor, just at the finish of what in America is called 'a hundred yards dash.' If we study a mask of some student who is just at the end of a 'dash' we shall find that in his face there is a general convergence of the lines to the root of the nose, the

frowning brows are drawn down and the eyes closed to the merest slits. The crow's feet at the outer angle of the eye are developed to a degree quite unknown at that age under ordinary circumstances in any student. The sneering expression of the nose is like the snarl of a dog, whilst the angles of the upper lip are drawn up so as to expose the canine teeth; the nose is dilated, the upper lip raised from the teeth, whilst the lower lip is drawn tightly across the clenched teeth, except at the outer angles. As Tait Mackenzie says: 'the general expression of the face is repulsive. Hate and rage predominate, with a feeling of distress about the strained mouth and neck.'

This realistic mask corresponds very accurately with the classical drawing of 'Rage' in Sir Charles Bell's work entitled 'The Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression,' except for the fact that in Sir Charles' figure the eyes are open and somewhat staring. At any rate there can be no doubt that the facial expression of hate and of extreme physical effort closely correspond, and we shall see later that the physiological processes which produce such similar expressions are in themselves identical.

Every now and then hate boils up into rage; and we now turn to the physiological effect according to one school, or to the physiological cause according to another, of hatred as manifested in rage.

Just above the kidneys there are two small glands, each about as big as a pea, known as suprarenal capsules, or adrenal glands. They belong to that small group of glands in our bodies which have no ducts, and whose secretions, whatever they are, pass directly into the blood. I have often wondered whether the ancient Hebrews knew anything about their effect, because they were so very particular in their burnt offerings to offer up 'the fat upon the kidneys.'¹ At any rate these two little glands play an enormous part in the physiology of hate. The secretion that these bodies pour into the blood is known as *adrenalin*. It is not controlled by the will. We cannot by taking thought diminish or increase the secretion of adrenalin. This secretion is of the nature of what physiologists call a 'reflex,' and its reaction is deeply entangled in the working of the nervous system, and is indeed automatic. It has for a long time been recognised that the characteristic feature of reflexes is purposeful: *i.e.* they automatically serve some object useful to the individual, and so to the race. When they act they are acting in the interest of the body. Such reflexes as

¹ See *The Religion of the Semites*, by W. Robertson Smith, p. 379.

sucking, vomiting, coughing (and many others might be mentioned) are all helpful to the individual and ultimately to the race. So that when we find automatic reflexes accompanying pain, fear, and rage, it is not unnatural to ask, What is their utility? Here we may mention that the results of increased secretion on the part of the adrenal bodies are practically the same as the result of the injection of adrenalin into the body. We have already seen that when a man turns into a violent rage his tendency is at once to combat or fight those against whom his rage is directed. Hence, whatever reactions may be useful, they must at least be prompt. As Professor Cannon and his able assistants have shown in their book on 'Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear, and Rage,' the effect of the adrenalin secretion is manifest in sixteen seconds, whilst the amount of sugar in the blood will in the course of 'a few minutes' rise between ten and thirty per cent.

For one of the first effects of an increase in this secretion is a pronounced increase of sugar in the blood. Now, muscular work is performed by energies supplied by carbonaceous material, and this sudden accession of sugar in the blood supplies the muscles with a much-needed food. 'In the agony of pain almost every muscle of the body is brought into strong reaction,' as Darwin wrote, and there is a considerable amount of evidence that the increase of sugar in the blood does, as Cannon says, in fact directly increase the muscular efficiency. Thus one of the effects of the secretion of adrenalin would be of direct benefit to an organism in a rage wishing to exercise stern muscular effort involving flight, conflict, or a struggle to be free.

Then, again, as Cannon points out, there is evidence that an increased secretion of adrenalin restores the irritability of fatigued muscle. The removal of the adrenal glands has a weakening effect on muscular power, and the injection of adrenalin has an invigorating effect. So that not only does adrenalin bring out sugar from the liver stock to feed the muscles, but it also has a remarkable influence in restoring fatigued muscles, and thus the secretion set free in pain or fear or rage puts the muscles of the body at the disposal of the nervous system, and any difficulty which the nerve impulses might have had in calling the muscles into full activity is diminished or done away with.

Thirdly, the flow of adrenalin has marked effects on the vascular system, and all of these effects are helpful or advantageous to men in a condition of rage or fear. Its sudden presence in the

blood drives the blood from the abdominal viscera into the organs which are most wanted for active combat: into 'the central nervous system, the lungs, the heart, and the active skeletal muscles.' Again, in small quantities the secretion has a stimulating effect upon the heart, and so it comes about that when a greater amount of work is demanded from the heart, with increased arterial pressure, blood is delivered to the heart in greater abundance, and the augmentation of the heart-beat is thus co-ordinated with other functions adapted to meet great emergencies.

Then again numerous investigators have shown that the injection of adrenalin into the blood produces a dilatation of the bronchioles, or ultimate passages of the lungs. The smooth muscles of the lungs are relaxed and deep, and rapid respiration, which is characteristic of all animals in pain or in great emotional excitement, is rendered more easy.

Finally, an animal which is to conquer in an imminent combat, should he be wounded, would obviously be advantaged if his blood clots quickly and well. Now pain increases the adrenalin secretion, and, according to Cannon and his colleagues, it also hastens the coagulation of the blood. Thus even a wound may have alleviating aspects. It increases the adrenalin secretion (which may help to close the cut vessels of the wound itself), and it hastens clotting of the blood.

We have thus seen that the secretion of these two inconspicuous little glands, which until recently have been regarded as a small matter, plays a very large part in the bodily changes which occur in states of extreme pain, fear, or rage, and serve to place 'un enragé' in an eminently favourable state for wreaking his passion on his opponent.

We have also shown that extreme rage and extreme physical effort produce on the face expressions that are almost identical. Now, it cannot be pretended for a moment that men at the end of a 'sprint' are in a state of hatred. Hence it seems to follow that men in a state of hatred are in the same condition as men who are putting out their utmost physical effort: that is to say, they are in a condition, should they come across the object of their hate, to exert the maximum harm upon it.

A. E. SHIPLEY.

THE HUSBANDMAN OF HEAVEN.

(Lines written near the burial-place of Burns.)

BY WILLIAM WATSON.

POET, whose very dust, here shed,
Is as the quick among the dead ;
Where revels thy carousing soul ?
What Hebe fills what mighty bowl,
Mantling with what immortal drink ?

Great Comrade! wouldst thou have me think
That, taught by Time himself to flee
The taverns of Eternity,
Thee the bright cup's perfidious gleam
Lures nevermore ? Then let me dream
That, 'mid yon constellations, thou
Drivest all night the heavenly Plough,
Wooing with song some sky-nymph fair
Who sits in Cassiopeia's Chair,
Or half unravels on her knees
That tangled net, the Pleiades,
Or, from thy over amorous strain,
Coyly escapes in Charles's Wain,
But wandering back, with starlike tears,
Yields to the Ploughman of the Spheres.

STRASBOURG.

AN EPISODE OF THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.

BY PAUL AND VICTOR MARGUERITTE.

TRANSLATED BY S. G. TALLENTYRE.

CHAPTER IX.

WHAT was to be held responsible for the degeneration, enfeeblement, and corruption of France, if not the Empire? It fell as a just, though tardy, expiation of its crimes, and to the Republic lapsed both the duty and the power of regenerating the country. Why should it fail to accomplish its task?

Once more, Germath began to hope, for that noble word 'Republic' stood to him for all his old faith in liberty, equality, and justice. He recalled the glorious dawn of 1848, when the work of the Revolution was once more taken in hand and its dreams renewed—those dreams of peace between nations and happiness among men.

Wholly ignorant of the political situation, and continually misled by false reports from without, he was consumed with a longing for news and maddened by his own helplessness. What could be more unendurable than isolation and ignorance in the feverish atmosphere of a city insanely credulous and tossed on all the waves of doubt, hope, and despair? As to succour and deliverance, they were no more to be depended on. Dumont's famous division, once expected from hour to hour, had now vanished into the clouds. Still, who could say that an armistice, followed by peace, might not be obtained?

The new government was not answerable for the faults of the old; if it really was true that the King of Prussia was making war on Napoleon, and not on the French people, why should not overtures be made? France was quite wealthy enough to bear the expenses of her defeat, while Alsace and Lorraine would buy themselves back by any fine, however ruinous—if it involved all the riches of the rich and the last sou of the poor!

No! no! These were but dreams! Germath knew it too well.

However this horrible war ended, Alsace would be the ransom of France—Alsace herself—her strength, her manhood !

She was already abandoned, and would remain the prey of fire and rapine. After a hundred and eighty-nine years of French possession, she would return to the great German nation, who—to woo her the more tenderly—buffeted and trampled her underfoot.

Once more his soul rose in revolt ; he came back to the one fixed idea—never to surrender, to die if needs must.

On this morning of August 10 he went about the town, or helped the exhausted firemen, as they hurried to and fro, in response to those eternal shouts of ' Fire ! Fire ! Fire, at the theatre ! Fire, at the *mairie* ! '

It was then that he heard news so unexpected that it completely overcame him.

From the silence of the neutral nations—some, pleased to see the French taught so sharp a lesson ; others, indifferent ; others again, sympathetic (but exceedingly careful not to express that sympathy too loud)—one voice was uplifted, that of the little free people of Switzerland. Touched by the sufferings of Strasbourg, it longed to alleviate them. The permission for the women, children, and old people to leave the city, which Urich had not been able to wring from the enemy's obduracy, the Swiss won from the pitiless Werder. In the person of their nation, humanity rose and arraigned Prussia before the tribunal of history ; Werder yielded, and on the morrow three delegates from the cantons of Zürich, Basle, and Berne were to arrive in Strasbourg.

The fact was announced by official notices. Germath learnt from Wohlfart's brother the indescribable emotion of the municipal commission, when the mayor, Humann, in a trembling voice and with hands quivering with agitation, unfolded and began to read the letter in which the President of the Swiss Republic announced the arrival of the delegates on their mission of salvation.

Incapable of continuing, Humann passed the sheet to his secretary, who took up the reading ; but his voice also was broken by sobs, and he could hardly finish. At the end, his hearers—seasoned to suffering as they were by the horrors of a fortnight's bombardment and the constant sight of so much unspeakable misery—wept ; and in the agitated silence which followed a trembling joy and fervour uplifted their hearts.

The Swiss Republic was going to take under its wing—feed, shelter, care for—all that the Strasbourgers held dearest in the

world, the only possessions they could still call their own—their wives, their mothers, their sick, their children, their aged; the weak and the innocent, whom death was gleaming so rapidly. There was a profound sensation throughout the city. Salvation had entered it; to some it meant freedom; to all, consolation.

September 11 dawned like a festival of pity and hope. Not a soul but was deeply moved. Notices had convoked the people to meet the delegates on their entrance, but there was no need of such bidding. The municipal commission, preceded by the mayor and deputies, marched towards the *Porte Nationale*, followed by an enormous crowd. Germath, André, and Uncle Anselme were part of it.

Anselme, who held Charles by the hand, was beaming, and in his best clothes. It was not that he expected anything for him or his from the intervention of the Swiss; but his simple heart expanded at so fine a sight and beat high with admiration and thankfulness. The whole of the previous evening he had been murmuring, 'That's fine! That's grand!' And for the first time for many days he awoke from a dream, and recalled to Charles' mind the old legends and ties of friendship which bound the free city of Strasbourg to Switzerland.

'You haven't forgotten, Charles, about the gunsmiths' fête and the Zürichers and their boat, and the big caldron of boiling rice, and how the Swiss said to the 'ammeistre,' 'As to-day we can bring you rice, still hot, so, in the hour of danger, you can depend on our coming quickly to your help!'

And Charles saw once again the huge vessel which had been preserved at the Library, and the picture—also burnt, which had hung in the Picture Gallery—commemorating the same event.

'When Basle was destroyed by an earthquake,' Anselme went on, 'the ruined families took refuge here, and Strasbourg and the Rhenish Republic gave money towards the rebuilding of their town. We have always been good friends—we and the Swiss!'

'Will they bring hot rice with them now?' said Charles, who was very fond of rice-pudding, and became more and more uneasy at hearing Ortrude say that food was scarcer and scarcer, that an egg cost five sous and potatoes were sixty francs a sack.

'They will bring something better than that,' Uncle Anselme answered; for he already saw his sister-in-law, André, and his dear little Charles abandoning their shelters and the rooms where they all slept, in their clothes, on mattresses, and arriving—with

poor Hannah, Ortrude, and Gretchen—at some peaceful Swiss town where they would soon forget their troubles, and Charles would get back his fat cheeks.

But, in point of fact, as soon as her husband had asked what they would do, Mme. Germath had replied, firmly and gently, ‘No, I shall not leave you. Please say no more! I have made up my mind! We have been through all these trials together, and, please God, we will see the end of them together too! I could not bear to think of you—or of you, Anselme—still here, while I lived comfortably at Basle or Zürich. Up to now, our children have been mercifully preserved; it is not right a family like ours should part.’

The most urgent persuasions failed in face of her resolution. But the step she refused to take for herself it was essential should be taken, and soon, for Lina Stoumpff, whose infant was wasting away for want of milk. Hannah and the other servants were asked if they wished to go; Gretchen alone accepted, as she had cousins at Lucerne. Ortrude had turned red and angry. What? she go, and leave her employers and the house where she had lived for thirty years? Never! Nor would Hannah hear of it—where should *I* go now, with my one hand? She had changed so much as to be hardly recognisable; could not resign herself to her misfortune, and cried over it bitterly; or sat, silent and preoccupied, with fixed, absent eyes.

André looked on every side in the excited crowd to see if he could find Lise. He at once wished her to go and to stay: longed to feel she was safe, and could not bear the thought of not seeing her. He desired first one alternative and then the other, according as the selfish or unselfish side of his love was in the ascendant, and was continually halting between the two feelings.

But—whatever the Ansberques decided to do—in the face of a fatal issue to the siege (a certainty which became more certain from day to day and from hour to hour) André felt the grip of that sorrow—already dimly divined—closing tighter and tighter upon him. He guessed—nay, he knew—that the fall of Strasbourg would open a new era in their lives, that all their future was in jeopardy; he was constantly and vainly questioning his soul, and trying to penetrate the gloomy shadows of the mysterious future.

Suddenly, on each side of him, there rose murmurs and imprecations; for the first time the crowd saw the burnt walls and ruined houses of the suburbs: the poorest and most populous

quarter was nothing but a stony wilderness. The *Porte Nationale*, with its two dark towers, could be seen from afar riddled with holes showing daylight through them. The batteries near by were silent ; but on the right, along the whole front of attack, the bombardment thundered.

Only the municipal commission crossed the drawbridge of the first line of fortifications ; a bugle sounded ; the second gate rolled back, and there stood the Swiss delegates—Bischoff, the secretary of State, Colonel de Büren, and Dr. Roemer. The people stretched out their hands to them, with tears streaming down their faces.

They were moving forward, when Humann stopped them, and tried to express to them the gratitude of the city.

‘Welcome!’ he said, ‘to the saviours of our women, our children, and our aged ! Do not forget to tell Europe of the things you will see within our walls ; tell her how war is waged in this nineteenth century !’ His voice shook, and then rose high. ‘Tell her the enemy’s fire is no longer directed against ramparts and soldiers, but against the civilian population ; and its first victims are women and children. Our ramparts, as you have seen, are intact, but our homes are burnt to the ground. Our churches, our ancient and historical monuments have been wantonly injured or destroyed ; our splendid Library exists no longer. Tell all this to Europe ; and tell her also that this brutality and devastation, these revivals of a barbarism more than Turkish, are useless, that they have left our spirit unquenched, and ourselves—as we have always been and always hope to be—determined and courageous Frenchmen !’

Dr. Bischoff, of Basle, merely answered, ‘I am no orator—our deeds must speak for us . . .’

And the procession wended its way to the town. As it passed into the suburbs, an electric current seemed to run through the crowd ; on an irresistible impulse they all uncovered and waved their handkerchiefs and shouted, ‘Vive la Suisse !’

In the emotions of that multitude the Germaths forgot their own. Suddenly André, who was doing his best to shield Charles, perched on his uncle’s shoulder, from the press, felt a little hand seize and convulsively press his own. It was Lise. She had caught the general fervour, and acted on an impulse stronger than her will ; the flame of a quick passion shone in her blue eyes. But she quickly recovered her self-possession. At her side, Ansberque was watching the slow advance through the crowd of the three men

who typified the pity of a nation and the humanity of the civilised world. He looked much older, shorn, as he was, of all his pride. He no longer even raged at this succession of misfortunes: he thought of one thing only—the fall of the Empire, the failure of all his once cherished beliefs; in that overthrow he felt himself overthrown. He had no faith at all in the Republic, and mournfully contemplated the dark days to come.

Into the beleaguered city there entered with the delegates, Truth—truth, so long disguised, gagged, and proscribed. At one blow Strasbourg learnt of the great events that had happened, and had many a strong word to say about them.

The official lies collapsed. The Republic had in very fact been established a week, and Strasbourg knew nothing about it! The delegates, after a consultation with the municipal commission at the chamber of commerce, proceeded to the governor's. By that time the roads were deserted. All along them the windows were stopped up with mattresses, and the gratings of the cellars were stuffed with manure; above these lugubrious homes shells screamed and exploded. Strasbourg had all the appearance of a city of the dead.

While General Uhrich received the delegates, and the commission examined the requests to leave the town and prepared lists for General Werder's examination, the Prefecture, put on its defence, set the police to work and tried to recapture public opinion. Rumours began to get about that the Swiss were the emissaries of the Prussians, engaged to spread false reports and so to discourage the people; then that de Büren, Roemer, and Bischoff were impostors and not Swiss at all. Some few of the people, blindly credulous, became furious, and awaited in the courtyard of the *hôtel de ville* the return of the delegates, who were with Uhrich. Painful scenes took place; there were violent altercations between the townsmen and the military, and between Bonapartist magistrates and Liberals. The Prefect held forth to various groups, entirely denying Sedan, the fall of the Empire, and the establishment of the Republic.

When, at four o'clock, the delegates entered a carriage in the Rue Brûlée to return to the Prussian camp, few people accompanied them; had they stayed a few hours longer in Strasbourg, for all thanks for their devotion they would have been grievously insulted. Report actually said that evening that they had been detained and imprisoned as spies.

The next day avenging truth killed these rumours. Strasbourg learnt of the peaceful revolution of September 4. Many houses were decorated with flags. The 'Marseillaise' was heard in the intervals of the firing. Hope was re-born; more certainly than deliverance or a victory, the Republic seemed to guarantee future salvation, an armistice, a speedy peace.

The Imperial administration—the Prefect and the central commission—disappeared. Baron Pron resigned, and a successor was provisionally named by the municipal commission. Humann, the mayor, retired with his deputies: and Dr. Küss assumed the heavy responsibility of representing the city, supported by new colleagues. As soon as it was reconstituted, the municipal commission condemned by a resolution those able-bodied men who, without valid reason, had left Strasbourg since the war broke out, and further declared them henceforth unworthy to fill any official post.

This bill covered up the one in which the Prefect, in taking leave of the people, had brought himself to avow the great events that had happened; and also the one in which Uhrich, acknowledging the government of national defence, appealed to the patriotism of all soldiers and civilians alike.

Those who wished to leave Strasbourg had to sign their names in the bureau of the chamber of commerce; since the morning of the 12th fifteen hundred people had asked for safe-conducts. Negotiations were proceeding between the Swiss delegates, General Werder, and the municipal magistrates. The first convoy was to be composed of persons having sufficient means to live in Switzerland; then would come the sick of all categories.

Prussian soldiers were to escort the carriages carrying these emigrants as far as Rhinau; fifty uncovered carts with straw at the bottom were to accommodate those whom the carriages would not hold.

On the 15th Uncle Anselme and Hannah went with Gretchen to the Austerlitz gate. Fair-haired Gretchen, now dreadfully sorry to leave, wept bitterly. She was to be in the same carriage with Lina Stoumpff and her baby and Mme. Gottus and her three boys. The same reasons which kept Mme. Germath at her husband's side had made Mme. Ansberque and Lise also decide to stay. The one had obstinately refused to leave her husband, and the other her father. André was glad and sorry by turns.

'Come now, Gretchen!' said Anselme kindly. 'Don't spoil

your pretty eyes! You ought to be delighted to leave us, you know!'

'Oh, no! no! M. Anselme! Oh, no! no!' and her sobs redoubled.

The brake containing the Gottus and the Stoumpffs arrived. The pastor and Stoumpff got out; they had stayed to the last possible minute with their families. Escorted by an interminable train of people on foot, the long line of carriages was formed, with as little confusion as haste permitted.

The thronging mob of half-scared people, of children clinging round their fathers' necks, of women sobbing, and of the sick looking wildly about them with feverish eyes, formed a lamentable spectacle. Gottus, Stoumpff, Uncle Anselme, and Hannah stood watching the brake filled with women, children, and luggage as long as their eyes could see it. The fair heads of the pastor's little boys were thrust between the leather curtains, the long robe of the Stoumpffs' infant made a white patch, and Gretchen was waving good-bye to Hannah, who, in her turn, waved a handkerchief with her one hand.

When the brake was quite lost to sight in the stream of emigrants, those left behind—from duty or necessity—looked at each other, and, though they felt heart-broken to be left alone, were yet comforted by the thought of so many dear lives saved and safe.

They separated in silence, Gottus going off in his direction, and the other three returning together, with their hearts too full for speech.

Each of them knew that Strasbourg's supreme moment was drawing nigh. This exodus of women and children, of the old and the invalid, was like the saving of the passengers by the boats from the deck of a sinking vessel. And not one of them but felt that he himself must stay on the ship: it was the man's part and duty.

But even now the enemy had begun to repent of his tardy humanity. Two days after the first batch of fugitives had left, Werder began to make difficulties and to refuse to allow the departure *en masse*. The door which had been open for an hour was first half, and then wholly, shut. Out of a city of 80,000 souls, hardly more than three or four thousand were able to get away. The bombardment was resumed with fresh violence. An officer with a flag of truce came yet again to summon Uhrich to surrender, telling him that if he did not, nothing would be spared or left standing.

'The attack has now entered on a phase which makes the bombardment of the town essential.'

Werder begged Urich therefore 'again to prepare the citizens *for this step*'—being resolved that he would take Strasbourg, dead or alive.

Once again, the scourge fell on the city. The enemy battered a breach in the ramparts and demolished the houses; more than four hundred were already in ruins. With three shots the German artillerymen twisted the cross on the top of the Cathedral. Sixty to eighty fresh victims were added each day. Six thousand persons were without shelter. Beneath the formidable fire from the batteries, the advance works gave way. With the help of the forced labour of the country people the German sappers, proceeding from parallel to parallel, were already on the edge of the glacis. The 53rd work had a breach of thirty mètres in its salient. It was evacuated and blown up. Bastion 52 was completely demolished. During the night the besiegers planted their flag on the salient of glacis 44 as if to take possession of it; Darbousier, a lieutenant of artillery, advanced from the works and tore it down.

The resistance was now only a question of days—or of hours. From morning to night a thick veil of smoke hung above Strasbourg; at night, from Mundolsheim, crowds watched the dark mass of houses and other buildings blaze luridly—a terrible transformation scene. Excursion trains for persons partial to fireworks (*die Schaulustigen*) enriched the German railway companies; those who liked sight-seeing engaged carriages at Kehl and in its neighbourhood, and drove down to the Rhine. The most sentimental of Germany's writers, the most virtuous and austere of her professors and savants, exulted aloud. Berthold Auerbach—the idyllic romancer—celebrated the beauty of this town in flames, the splendour of its shameful destruction, and the aureole of fire with which German generals and princes crowned themselves, in a series of enthusiastic letters, written on the spot. One writer said that 'France was doubtless full of charm, wit, and loveliness, but that it was essential, just this once, to pinch her delicate fingers until the blood spurted out from under the pink little nails.' Yet, all the same, it was said that among the besieging artillery the soldiers and officers themselves were moved to pity and obeyed orders with reluctance. As to the Grand Duke of Baden—that impotent philanthropist—he merely replied to the pastors, imploring mercy and peace in the name of Heaven, 'These are the laws of war; things may become much worse than this.'

One wet, cold evening, when everything was soaked with rain,

there was a gloomy meeting of old friends at the Germaths'. Humblot, Pastor Gottus, Stoumpff were there, and Wohlfart, who, since Werder had threatened it with the laws of war, was no longer one of the free company of Liès-Bodard, but, with many of his fellows in it and in Geissen's company, had joined the militia. A slight wound alone prevented him being on duty this evening.

The news was bad. The ill-fed soldiery were loudly complaining; in the ambulances and hospitals, so Humblot declared, insubordination went unchecked. In spite of the numbers of doctors and medical students, smallpox and other infectious diseases were making startling headway; the chapel at the military hospital was always draped with black, and the masses for the dead followed hard on each other.

'The worst symptom of all,' said M. Gottus, 'is the attitude of the dregs of the people; in times of crisis, like these, the underworld is always disturbed. Bands of vagabonds are breaking into the houses in the suburbs and carrying off their contents. Yesterday, at the corner of our road, I myself overheard some very evil-looking jail-birds saying, 'Now for the plunder of the rich—and high time too!'

Stoumpff put in, 'Strasbourg can't possibly hold out much longer!'

'What matter?' said Germath. 'So long as she holds out to the extreme limit of her strength and to her last man! We must make the sacrifice, for we are keeping a whole army corps under our walls. We are the shield of France.'

Wohlfart shook his head mournfully. Ideas of capitulation were already in the air. Lowering his voice, he said, 'If it were not for the Committee of Defence, the city would surrender.'

Everybody seeming doubtful, he continued, 'It is true, though. After a long interview with the municipal commission, Uhrich—knowing the hopelessness of the situation, and moved by the sufferings of the people—drew up a letter to General Werder, and, having laid the facts before the Committee of Defence, declared he considered the resistance to be at its last gasp, and gave the letter to Colonel Ducasse, bidding him to go to the general headquarters of the enemy and treat for surrender. The committee were greatly agitated, and protested vehemently. Uhrich declared the sitting at an end. The members rose, and, in the next room, discussed the situation with so much vehemence that Uhrich came in. The prayers and protestations were redoubled. Admiral

Exelmans declared, 'This decision is premature. I protest against it, and I withdraw!' General Barral, in a violent passion, shouted, 'This is the capitulation of Baylen over again!' Lieutenant-Colonel Maritz, of the engineers, actually broke into sobs as he tried to persuade Uhrich. Colonel Blot refused to be associated with the decision, saying that his regiment had suffered greatly, but was still prepared to go on fighting. Colonel Ducasse—like a true soldier—declared himself ready to carry out orders, but it would be with despair in his soul; they could still fight, and they ought to fight. It was contrary to the army regulations that they should surrender before a practicable breach was made. Their resistance kept back more than 60,000 Germans. He asked for the minutes of the proceedings that he might record his own vote—Resistance to the death! Uhrich, greatly shaken, replied, 'The tears of Lieutenant-Colonel Maritz and the legitimate protestation of Colonel Ducasse influence me far more than all the intemperate expressions to which I have listened. Then, gentlemen, you are of the opinion we can still fight?' 'Yes! Yes!' Uhrich replied, 'That is sufficient. Colonel Ducasse, give me back my letter. We shall continue our defence, and we shall not lay down our arms until you assure me with one voice that all is over!'

Thanks to Wohlfart's incisive tones and dramatic gestures, everybody heard and saw the scene. It was only too certain that the municipal commission, out of pity for the misery of the town, desired to capitulate. The evening before, all its forty-five members—with only two exceptions, Mallarmé and Lipp—had expressed to the governor their desire that negotiations should be opened with the enemy.

This time, better advised, Uhrich replied that it was certainly heart-breaking to see the suffering of the people: but their example would not be fruitless: Toul, Verdun, Montmédy still held out. Paris—Paris, which was decking the statue of Strasbourg in the Place de la Concorde with flowers—would be inspired to conquer by their noble example.

'Strasbourg,' he added, 'Strasbourg is Alsace! So long as our flag floats on her walls, Alsace is French; Strasbourg once fallen, Alsace will become Prussian, and Prussian for ever,!' He asked for yet a little further patience and for courageous resignation.

'He is right!' cried Germath.

But, if everyone thought it, he was the only one to say it. There was a mournful silence.

CHAPTER X.

The next day the only subject of conversation was the arrival of Valentin, the new Prefect, and his heroic adventures.

It was well known that the Government of National Defence had nominated him to replace the Prefect appointed under the Empire, but no one believed that he could possibly get through the German lines and reach the town.

'I would never have thought it possible,' said M. Germath.

The family were sitting at *déjeuner*, which consisted of horse stewed with potatoes.

'I should never have supposed it possible,' he repeated, 'even though I knew Valentin to be a man of energy. He is an Alsatian. You remember, Anselme, in '49 the Bas-Rhin elected him, almost unanimously, to represent the people in the National Assembly?'

'Yes, yes,' said Anselme. 'Why don't you go on eating, Charles? You never seem hungry now.'

The little boy, who was very pale and with cheeks greatly sunken, made a face.

He had recovered his appetite when his uncle's words were verified and they had had *pâté de foie gras*; but this horse was so dreadfully tough it might as well be a wooden one!

André was absorbed in listening to his father's story of Valentin's enterprise and success. It sounded like fiction, and would remain a page of history for ever.

'Listen, Charles,' said Mme. Germath. 'It is a most interesting story—and true.'

Even her calm face became animated as she thought of that struggle in the teeth of so many obstacles: of the cleverness and audacity of this man, making his way alone through a hostile army.

'He had risked his life twenty times,' said Germath. 'Armed with an American passport, he attempted to reach Strasbourg from the south. A patrol stopped him, and released him in fifteen hours. He tried to get into the fortress by the Ill, but was arrested and turned back again. He then decided to make for Wissembourg. Everyone helped him; women and children showed him the way; disguised as a peasant, he passed through the enemy's lines, slept in the house where Werder and his staff

were having coffee, and overheard them speak of the "famous Valentin" and the excellence of their precautions. He hid in one of the last houses in Schiltigheim, close to our ill-fated factory. For several days he watched the trenches and the military operations; then he seized his opportunity and made off; the alarm was given—they fired on him. Flat on his face, he crawled under fire through fields of maize and potatoes, until he reached the banks of the Aar opposite lunette No. 57, and threw himself into the river. He got entangled in some weeds, landed again, again took to the river, and, having shouted in vain to the sentinel on the brink of the ditch, managed to gain the opposite bank, and with difficulty hauled himself to the top of the parapet. There he stood up, shouting "France! France!" He was met with a volley. Then an old Zouave took aim at him, but a corporal struck down his rifle, crying, "Stop firing! He is alone."

'Now that's a real man, if you like!' said Ortrude, who had been listening as she cleared away.

Germath went on: 'He was put in one of the summerhouses of the Lipps' garden, as it was too late to get him into the town. At six o'clock this morning he was taken to the general headquarters. "Announce the Prefect of the Lower Rhine," he said, and, drawing his nomination paper from his torn sleeve, he handed it to Ulrich.'

'How unfortunate that we did not have him earlier,' said Mme. Germath. 'Such an energy as his, if it had been employed sooner, might have done great things!'

That same evening the Prefecture was burnt. 'Illuminations to celebrate my arrival, I suppose!' said Valentin with a smile. He met, however, a cold reception from the municipal commission and the town. For this reason: the same decree which appointed him Prefect appointed M. Engelhardt mayor, and Engelhardt was a barrister and publicist whose political views had made him unpopular. Many liberals hated the idea of the new government arrogating to itself, as the old had done, the right of naming the chief magistrates of the people, as well as the right of imposing on Strasbourg a representative whom nobody wanted. Had the people demanded the communal franchise for twenty years past merely to see the young Republic refuse it now? Was the new prefect going to thrust this new mayor on them? Happily, Valentin, by frank explanations, was able to avert the crisis; Engelhardt's

nomination should remain in abeyance ; Strasbourg should have no mayor but M. Kiess.

But what could even these men of the highest courage do now beneath that hail of fire and death ? In the four districts of the defence, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Rallet, Colonel Petitpied, Colonel Blot, and Vice-Admiral Exelmans, the 87th infantry, the militia, the frontier guard, the marines had fought gallantly, but in vain. In vain the artillery had been killed at their posts beside their dismounted guns ; in vain, with shattered embrasures and levelled parapets, did they spend whole nights in piling sandbags as a protection for the guns. Hour by hour the enemy drew nearer. His great siege-mortars wrought fearful havoc. Every day immense quantities of shells, shrapnel, and bombs from the reserves in the German fortresses were brought up in special trains, twenty truckloads at a time. More than 180,000 projectiles had already been launched against the town and ramparts ; bastions 11 and 12 were breached ; and five works, abandoned in turn, dropped off like pearls from a necklace whose string is broken.

On the ground of the sufferings of the people, the municipal commission had made one more appeal to Urich.

He had answered, ' I am acting under military law, and my honour depends on my faithful obedience to it ' ; then he added, ' Events are moving on . . . ' And there was not one of his hearers but felt himself swept away by that fearful current.

The hours—the very minutes—seemed interminable. The most sensitive became hardened. When they heard that the theatre was in flames ; that women had given birth to children in the great sewer ; that a bomb had struck the church of St. John and killed the poor wretches sheltering there ; that the decimated firemen were wholly unable to cope with the fires, for shells had smashed the water-buckets and struck down the horses of the fire-engines ; that famine threatened ; that the refuse thrown on the glacis was becoming a fruitful source of disease ; that in the Botanical Gardens the dead were crowded five and twenty together in trenches in the putrid earth—when people were told these things, they looked at their informant without astonishment, or merely answered ' Ah ! ' without another word.

The power to suffer became exhausted. All natural conditions were reversed ; life became the exception, and death the rule ; people got used to it. Yes ! heart-breaking as it was, it was true—

people got used to it ! What indeed could they do when an intimate friend disappeared and came back no more ? They ceased to grieve at last : they had no tears left.

Persons without number, immured in damp cellars amid dirt and decay, waited, passive and inert, the coming of death. The feeble, the very old and the very young, soon died.

Those who remained masters of their souls to the end were great indeed. They went about in the shell-pitted streets, stopping to avoid shells, often pale, with beating hearts, the flesh revolting against the spirit which dominated them—and heroes so much the more. And the heroic were not only soldiers, hardened to danger, but ordinary citizens, women, street-arabs. Humblot grew bolder. Even Stoumpff took risks. Charles had forgotten Noémi, and the uproar now seemed to him quite natural. At sudden explosions, all he said was, 'Puff ! Puff ! Bang ! Bang ! We shan't give in, shall we, mamma ?'

Sometimes, of an evening, Anselme produced his violin and played Beethoven for hours. When the bombardment was too loud, and drowned the wail of the bow, Mme. Germath and her husband would stoop to listen—a hand at the ear. That thrilling voice—that breath of a soul—brought a calmer atmosphere ; the present was forgotten, the past revived ; the melancholy walls of the casemates disappeared and gave place to the panelling of the old *salon*. The happy familiar evenings under the lamplight came back : and the times of peace—when one could be out of doors all day, walking in the country under the clear sky, and the trees, which September had painted red and gold, swayed gently above the green waters ; when the land was all under tillage, the swallows were gathering, and the night and morning mists presaged autumn ; while the glory of field and wood radiated at once joy and infinite sadness.

All this Anselme's violin brought back, and vanished happiness and the good days of old. As to the future, no one dared to think of it.

André listened gravely and untiringly to that voice of the bow—sobbing, singing, praying. It echoed the feelings of his own sad heart ; and as it rose in a wild, throbbing cry, and then sank to notes rich, deep, and tender, a strange sorrow took possession of his soul. On some evenings, instead of braving the dark streets to spend an hour with Lise in the gloomy cellar where she and her mother were sheltering, he remained at home, his elbows on the table, his chin resting in his hands, deep in thought. It was

certainly neither indolence nor fear that kept him there, nor was it that he could not see Lise in private, but only in the presence of two or three frightened women—for merely to be near her, to look at her in silence, was the deepest happiness to him. He could not indeed have said what it was that kept him there and held him spell-bound by the music—he hardly dared ask himself, for when he looked into his soul he was so baffled by what he found there that he drew back, afraid.

Lise ! Lise ! How he loved her all the same ! What despair he had felt when he could not see her ; what pride and joy when he had rescued her ; what wild delight it had been to find that the bad dream was but a dream after all, and that, awake, new life and a new future were his.

Yes—but what future ? Could there indeed be one for them ? Would not this fearful present swallow and absorb it ?

Passionate, fervent, egotistical as his love was, something greater was imposing itself upon him, was crushing him at this moment—the sufferings of his country.

He was astounded to find himself thinking of Strasbourg, and of Strasbourg only. That fortnight of grief and emotion had remoulded him, had made him a different person. A fortnight ago his love for Lise had been infinitely more to him than any public calamity : *that* he rebelled against because Lise might suffer through it ; he felt enraged to think they could not freely and peacefully enjoy their love and their youth ; he cursed the war which, otherwise, was nothing to him. But now the national catastrophe touched his very soul ; his whole being suffered in the sufferings of his city and country, and that, not because they menaced Lise and himself, but because they hurt so many innocent beings. Now, he made himself one with the city in its peril ; he felt himself bound by a thousand tender bonds to Strasbourg, to Alsace, to France. On the day he had walked with his father without the walls—that unforgettable day of the first great fires—the past, the customs and the traditions of the city, had made their first strong appeal to him. But how much stronger was that appeal to-day ! Then he had been a child, now he was a man ; for in that fiery hot-house he had been quickly forced to maturity. He loved Lise now as much, and perhaps more completely and more seriously—but not in the same way. All the romance of his young passion had faded ; he was face to face with reality, and felt that even their love, great, beautiful, and true as it was, was a small thing,

a narrow and selfish sentiment, in comparison with the powerful emotions which swept through their souls in these cruel hours. The other evening, sitting near Lise, he had been mournfully conscious of this. They had found themselves unable to talk of themselves; they were absent—forgetful of each other. Their thoughts rose above their individual lives to that vast affliction which enveloped them, and which enveloped so many others like them, in flesh and in spirit. After long silences and, occasionally, a few sorrowful words, they lapsed into reverie; and when they roused themselves from it, looked at each other like two people separated by a wide moat, who hold out longing arms and can never reach each other again.

Then presently he dismissed these fancies. Depression? despair? The very knowledge that they shared in and sympathised with the sorrows of so many others should ennoble their love; why should these fearful disasters harm it, and why should it be incompatible with their duty to their country? Why should they be ashamed of it? Was not this the very moment, with death hanging over them, to cling closer to one another—to stand heart to heart?

All the time, the voice of the violin rose and fell.

The 24th of September came. Strasbourg had now been besieged for seven weeks and was crumbling away hour by hour. On either side of the Porte de Pierre a breach was being made in the main wall of the place. From the outworks 52 and 53 (which had fallen) mortars and guns were piercing the ramparts; the dull thunder of the shells bursting against the masonry and pulverising it could be heard in the town. The assault was in preparation. The besiegers were getting ready rafts, supported on casks, and fascines, weighted with paving-stones. The town was to be bombarded with incendiary shells (*mit Brandgranaten*) by all the batteries at once. The Pomernians, whom Werder called the Turcos of Prussia, would head the attacking columns. Once started, nothing could keep them back. Then the full horrors of a sacked town would be let loose.

The Grand Duke of Baden intervened. 'As a good neighbour to Alsace, and pre-eminently to Strasbourg,' he wrote to beg Uhrich to listen to the voice of a German prince, who was fighting for his country's glory but who, nevertheless, realised his duty to God, in whose eyes the only true glory is brotherly love. The general had done his duty: why not anticipate the certain fall of Strasbourg,

'since he well knew the cost to the garrison and the still more fatal consequences to the town itself of further delay?'

Uhrich replied as a 'citizen of Strasbourg'—which honourable title had been conferred on him by the city. Despite his grief for 'the ruins which surrounded them, for these unarmed men, these unhappy women, these children who were falling beneath bullet and grape-shot,' he would do his duty to the end.

Our artillery was quickly worsted, was dismounted, was annihilated. The rampart was no longer tenable, except for a man here and there. The parapets of the last outwork, those of the town itself, were fast being levelled. On the front attacked there was not a single piece that could be fired. Not a shelter remained to mask the troops who were to repulse the attack on the breaches. The scattered and demoralised garrison was no longer under the control of its officers. Colonel Blot was wounded, and so was Dupetit-Thouars. On September 27 the officer in charge of the works of the fortifications and the chief officer of the engineers came to warn Uhrich that the breach of bastion 11 was feasible; the assault might be delivered on the following day,—or that very evening,—or in *two hours*; they were at the mercy of the enemy.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon. Germath and André heard the noise in the streets, and went out. Everyone was running and gesticulating. When they arrived at the Cathedral, they saw the white flag floating from it.

'We have capitulated,' said someone. 'No, no!' answered another. 'It is the flag of the Genevan Convention!' 'But it has no Red Cross!' 'No, no! we have capitulated at last!'

Some people asserted this; they questioned the officers. The whole population overflowed into the streets and gathered in the public squares. The Germaths were borne along on a torrent of men to the chamber of commerce. An officer had announced an armistice. A solemn silence weighed on that human ant-heap; the hail of fire had stopped. The sudden cessation was profoundly impressive.

'Ah!' said Germath, pressing his son's arm. 'What would I not give to hear the guns again!'

Some of the people burst into loud imprecations. The mayor had been seen, with tears in his eyes, announcing that the town had that moment been surrendered. Some mounted officers had left at a gallop, and many were awaiting their return with the impatience of exasperation. People cursed Uhrich. Some young

men wanted to break open the Cathedral door and tear down the flag that floated above the yelling mob. Others tried to shoot it down. The call to arms was sounded. The francs-tireurs talked of going out together and selling their lives dearly. When the mayor crossed the Place Gutenberg on his way to headquarters, he was met with shouts of 'Down with the mayor! Down with the governor! Death to all traitors!' The general and the members of the commission were mobbed and threatened. At the Prefecture, Valentin succeeded only with the greatest difficulty in calming the revolt. Among the most enraged were those who, pallid from the darkness of their cellars, had only the night before agreed to give themselves up; the timid became infuriated; the women above all—who had so greatly suffered—were the most indignant.

The fearful chorus of curses and execration which rose from the ruined city was born of a passionate despair and a wrath too long delayed, and was but the vain convulsion of a death agony. The bayonets of the National Guard made their appearance; the battalions were lined up, and the crowd melted away.

Germath and André found Stoumpff and Humblot quite frantic, and Gottus and Wohlfart heart-broken; none of them could speak, and they avoided even looking at each other. From a little way off Ansberque saw them, but he did not join them; he was too much overcome, and got out of their way.

The public agitation calmed down a little. Night fell.

The buzzing streets were gradually deserted. The sentinels patrolled from point to point. In the emptiness, the silence grew more oppressive every hour.

Strasbourg's life was over.

(To be concluded.)

BETWEEN THE LINES.

IV.—A CONVERT TO CONSCRIPTION.

' . . . have maintained and consolidated our position in the captured trench.'—EXTRACT FROM OFFICIAL DESPATCH.

NUMBER nine two ought three six, Sapper Duffy, J., A Section, Southland Company, Royal Engineers, had been before the war plain Jim Duffy, labourer, and as such had been an ardent anti-militarist, anti-conscriptionist, and anti-everything else his labour leaders and agitators told him. His anti-militarist beliefs were sunk soon after the beginning of the war, and there is almost a complete story itself in the tale of their sinking, weighted first by a girl, who looked ahead no further than the pleasure of walking out with a khaki uniform, and finally plunged into the deeps of the Army by the gibe of a stauncher anti-militarist during a heated argument that, 'if he believed now in fighting, why didn't he go'n fight himself?' But even after his enlistment he remained true to his beliefs in voluntary service, and the account of his conversion to the principles of Conscription—no half-and-half measures of 'military training' or rifle clubs or hybrid arrangements of that sort, but out-and-out Conscription—may be more interesting, as it certainly is more typical of the conversion of more thousands of members of the Serving Forces than will ever be known—until those same thousands return to their civilian lives and the holding of their civilian votes.

By nightfall the captured trench—well, it was only a courtesy title to call it a trench. Previous to the assault the British guns had knocked it about a good deal, bombs and grenades had helped further to disrupt it in the attacks and counter-attacks during the day, and finally, after it was captured and held, the enemy had shelled and high-explosived it out of any likeness to a real trench. But the infantry had clung throughout the day to the ruins, had beaten off several strong counter-attacks, and in the intervals had done what they could to dig themselves more securely in and re-pile some heaps of sandbags from the shattered parapet on the trench's new front. The casualties had been heavy, and since there was no

passage from the front British trench to the captured portion of the German except across the open of the 'neutral' ground, most of the wounded and all the killed had had to remain under such cover as could be found in the wrecked trench. The position of the unwounded was bad enough and unpleasant enough, but it was a great deal worse for the wounded. A bad wound damages mentally as well as physically. The 'casualty' is out of the fight, has had a first field dressing placed on his wound, has been set on one side to be removed at the first opportunity to the Dressing Station and the rear. He can do nothing more to protect himself or take such cover as offers. He is in the hands of the stretcher-bearers and must submit to be moved when and where they think fit. And in this case the casualties did not even have the satisfaction of knowing that every minute that passed meant a minute further from the danger zone, a minute nearer to safety and to the doctors, and the hospitals' hope of healing. Here they had to lie throughout the long day, hearing the shriek of each approaching shell, waiting for the crash of its fall, wondering each time if *this* one, the rush of its approach rising louder and louder to an appalling screech, was going to be the finish—a 'direct hit.' Many of the wounded were wounded again or killed as they lay, and from others the strength and the life had drained slowly out before nightfall. But now that darkness had come the casualties moved out and the supports moved in. From what had been the German second trench, and on this portion of front was now their forward one, lights were continually going up and bursts of rifle and machine-gun fire were coming; and an occasional shell still whooped up and burst over or behind the captured trench. This meant that the men—supports, and food and water carriers, and stretcher-bearers—were under a dangerous fire even at night in crossing the old 'neutral ground,' and it meant that one of the first jobs absolutely necessary to the holding of the captured trench was the making of a connecting path more or less safe for moving men, ammunition, and food by night or day.

This, then, was the position of affairs when a section of the Southland Company of Engineers came up to take a hand, and this communication trench was the task that Sapper Duffy, J., found himself set to work on. Personally Sapper Duffy knew nothing of and cared less for the tactical situation. All he knew or cared about was that he had done a longish march up from the rear the night before, that he had put in a hard day's work carrying

up bags of sandbags and rolls of barbed wire from the carts to the trenches, and that here before him was another night's hard labour, to say nothing of the prospect of being drilled by a rifle bullet or mangled by a shell. All the information given him and his Section by their Section officer was that they were to dig a communication trench, that it must be completed before morning, that as long as they were aboveground they would probably be under a nasty fire, and that therefore the sooner they dug themselves down under cover the better it would be for the job and for all concerned. 'A' Section removed its equipment and tunics and moved out on to the neutral ground in its shirt-sleeves, shivering at first in the raw cold and at the touch of the drizzling rain, but knowing that the work would very soon warm them beyond need of hampering clothes. In the ordinary course digging a trench under fire is done more or less under cover by sapping—digging the first part in a covered spot, standing in the deep hole, cutting down the 'face' and gradually burrowing a way across the danger zone. The advantage of this method is that the workers keep digging their way forward while all the time they are below ground and in the safety of the sap they dig. The disadvantage is that the narrow trench only allows one or two men to get at its end or 'face' to dig, and the work consequently takes time. Here it was urgent that the work be completed that night, because it was very certain that as soon as its whereabouts was disclosed by daylight it would be subjected to a fire too severe to allow any party to work, even if the necessary passage of men to and fro would leave any room for a working party. The digging therefore had to be done down from the surface, and the diggers, until they had sunk themselves into safety had to stand and work fully exposed to the bullets that whined and hissed across from the enemy trenches.

A zigzag line had been laid down to mark the track of the trench, and Sapper Duffy was placed by his Sergeant on this line and told briefly to 'get on with it.' Sapper Duffy spat on his hands, placed his spade on the exact indicated spot, drove it down, and began to dig at a rate that was apparently leisurely but actually was methodical and nicely calculated to a speed that could be long and unbrokenly sustained. During the first minute many bullets whistled and sang past, and Sapper Duffy took no notice. A couple went 'whutt' past his ear, and he swore and slightly increased his working speed. When a bullet whistles or sings past it is a comfortable distance clear; when it goes 'hiss' or

'swish' it is too close for safety; and when it says 'whutt' very sharply and viciously it is merely a matter of being a few inches out either way. Sapper Duffy had learned all this by full experience, and now the number of 'whutts' he heard gave him a very clear understanding of the dangers of this particular job. He was the furthest out man of the line. On his left hand he could just distinguish the dim figure of another digger, stooping and straightening, stooping and straightening with the rhythm and regularity of a machine. On his right hand was empty darkness, lit up every now and then by the glow of a flare-light showing indistinctly through the drizzling rain. Out of the darkness, or looming big against the misty light, figures came and went stumbling and slipping in the mud—stretcher-bearers carrying or supporting the wounded, a ration-party staggering under boxes balanced on shoulders, a strung-out line of supports stooped and trying to move quietly, men in double files linked together by swinging ammunition boxes. All these things Private Duffy saw out of the tail of his eye, and without stopping or slacking the pace of his digging. He fell unconsciously to timing his movements to those of the other man, and for a time the machine became a twin-engine working beat for beat—thrust, stoop, straighten, heave; thrust, stoop, straighten, heave. Then a bullet said the indescribable word that means 'hit' and Duffy found that the other half of the machine had stopped suddenly and collapsed in a little heap. Somewhere along the line a voice called softly 'Stretcher-bearers,' and almost on the word two men and a stretcher materialised out of the darkness and a third was stooping over the broken machine. 'He's gone,' said the third man after a pause. 'Lift him clear.' The two men dropped the stretcher, stooped and fumbled, lifted the limp figure, laid it down a few yards away from the line, and vanished in the direction of another call. Sapper Duffy was alone with his spade and a foot-deep square hole—and the hissing bullets. The thoughts of the dead man so close beside him disturbed him vaguely, although he had never given a thought to the scores of dead he had seen behind the trench and that he knew were scattered thick over the 'neutral ground' where they had fallen in the first charge. But this man had been one of his own Company and his own Section—it was different about him somehow. But of course Sapper Duffy knew that the dead must at times lie where they fall, because the living must always come before the dead, especially while there are many more wounded than there are stretchers or stretcher-bearers. But

all the same he didn't like poor old 'Jigger' Adams being left there—didn't see how he could go home and face old 'Jigger's missus and tell her he'd come away and left 'Jigger' lying in the mud of a mangel-wurzel field. Blest if he wouldn't have a try when they were going to give Jigger a lift back. A line of men, shirt-sleeved like himself and carrying spades in their hands, moved out past him. An officer led them, and another with Sapper Duffy's Section officer brought up the rear, and passed along the word to halt when he reached Duffy. 'Here's the outside man of my lot,' he said, 'so you'll join on beyond him. You've just come in, I hear, so I suppose your men are fresh?'

'Fresh!' said the other disgustedly. 'Not much. They've been digging trenches all day about four miles back. It's too sickening. Pity we don't do like the Bosches—conscript all the able-bodied civilians and make 'em do all this trench-digging in rear. Then we might be fresh for the firing line.'

'Tut, tut—mustn't talk about conscripting 'em,' said Duffy's officer reprovingly. 'One volunteer, y'know—worth three pressed men.'

'Yes,' said the other, 'but when there isn't enough of the "one volunteer" it's about time to collar the three pressed.'

Two or three flares went up almost simultaneously from the enemy's line, the crackle of fire rose to a brisk fusillade, and through it ran the sharp 'rat-at-at-at' of a machine gun. The rising sound of the reports told plainly of the swinging muzzle, and officers and men dropped flat in the mud and waited till the sweeping bullets had passed over their heads. Men may work on and 'chance it' against rifle fire alone, but the sweep of a machine gun is beyond chance, and very near to the certainty of sudden death to all in the circle of its swing.

The officers passed on and the new men began to dig. Sapper Duffy also resumed work, and as he did so he noticed there was something familiar about the bulky shape of the new digger next to him. 'What lot are you?' asked the new man, heaving out the first spadeful rapidly and dexterously.

'We're A Section, Southland Company,' said Duffy, 'an' I say—ain't you Beefy Wilson?'

'That's me,' said the other without checking his spade. 'And blow me! you must be Duffy—Jem Duffy.'

'That's right,' said Duffy. 'But I didn't know you'd joined, Beefy.'

'Just a week or two after you,' said Beefy.

'Didjer know boss's two sons had got commissions? Joined the Sappers an' tried to raise a Company out o' the works to join. Couldn't though. I was the only one.'

'Look out—'ere's that blanky maxim again,' said Duffy, and they dropped flat very hurriedly.

There was no more conversation at the moment. There were too many bullets about to encourage any lingering there, and both men wanted all their breath for their work. It was hard work too. Duffy's back and shoulder and arm muscles began to ache dully, but he stuck doggedly to it. He even made an attempt to speed up to Beefy's rate of shovelling, although he knew by old experience alongside Beefy that he could never keep up with him, the unchallenged champion of the old gang.

Whether it was that the lifting rain had made them more visible or that the sound of their digging had been heard they never knew, but the rifle fire for some reason became faster and closer, and again and again the call passed for stretcher-bearers, and a constant stream of wounded began to trickle back from the trench-diggers. Duffy's section was not so badly off now because they had sunk themselves hip deep, and the earth they threw out in a parapet gave extra protection. But it was harder work for them now because they stood in soft mud and water well above the ankles. The new Company, being the more exposed, suffered more from the fire, but each man of them had a smaller portion of trench to dig, so they were catching up on the first workers. But all spaded furiously and in haste to be done with the job, while the officers and sergeants moved up and down the line and watched the progress made.

More cold-bloodedly unpleasant work it would be hard to imagine. The men had none of the thrill and heat of combat to help them; they had not the hope that a man has in a charge across the open—that a minute or two gets the worst of it over; they had not even the chance the fighting man has where at least his hand may save his head. Their business was to stand in the one spot, open and unprotected, and without hope of cover or protection for a good hour or more on end. They must pay no heed to the singing bullets, to the crash of a bursting shell, to the rising and falling glow of the flares. Simply they must give body and mind to the job in hand, and dig and dig and keep on digging. There had been many brave deeds done by the fighting men on that day: there had been bold leading and bold following in the first rush across the open

against a tornado of fire; there had been forlorn-hope dashes for ammunition or to pick up wounded; there had been dogged and desperate courage in clinging all day to the battered trench under an earth-shaking tempest of high-explosive shells, bombs, and bullets. But it is doubtful if the day or the night had seen more nerve-trying, courage-testing work, more deliberate and long-drawn bravery than was shown, as a matter of course and as a part of the job, in the digging of that communication trench.

It was done at last, and although it might not be a Class One Exhibition bit of work, it was, as Beefy Wilson remarked, 'a deal better'n none.' And although the trench was already a foot deep in water, Beefy stated no more than bald truth in saying, 'Come to-morrow there's plenty will put up glad wi' their knees bein' below high-water mark for the sake o' havin' their heads below low bullet mark.'

But if the trench was finished the night's work for the Engineers was not. They were moved up into the captured trench, and told that they had to repair it and wire out in front of it before they were done.

They had half an hour's rest before recommencing work, and Beefy Wilson and Jem Duffy hugged the shelter of some tumbled sandbags, lit their pipes and turned the bowls down, and exchanged reminiscences.

'Let's see,' said Beefy. 'Isn't Jigger Adams in your lot?'

'Was,' corrected Jem, 'till an hour ago. 'E's out yon wi' a bullet in 'im—stiff by now.'

Beefy breathed blasphemous regrets. 'Rough on 'is missus an' the kids. Six of 'em, weren't it?'

'Aw,' assented Jem. 'But she'll get suthin' from the Society funds.'

'Not a ha'porth,' said Beefy. 'You'll remem—no, it was just arter you left. The trades unions decided no benefits would be paid out for them as 'listed. It was Ben Shrillett engineered that. 'E was Secretary an' Treasurer an' things o' other societies as well as ours. 'E fought the War right along, an' 'e's still fightin' it, 'E's a anti-militant, 'e ses.'

'Anti-militarist,' Jem corrected. He had taken some pains himself in the old days to get the word itself and some of its meaning right.

'Anti-military-ist then,' said Beefy. 'Any'ow, 'e stuck out agin all sorts o' soldierin'. This stoppin' the Society benefits

was a trump card too. It blocked a whole crowd from listin' that I know myself would ha' joined. Queered the boss's sons raisin' that Company too. They 'ad Frickers an' the B.S.L. Co. an' the works to draw from. Could ha' raised a couple hundred easy if Ben Shrillett 'adn't got at 'em. You know 'ow 'e talks the fellers round.'

'I know,' agreed Jem, sucking hard at his pipe.

The Sergeant broke in on their talk. 'Now then,' he said briskly. 'Sooner we start, sooner we're done an' off 'ome to our downy couch. 'Ere, Duffy—' and he pointed out the work Duffy was to start.

For a good two hours the engineers laboured like slaves again. The trench was so badly wrecked that it practically had to be reconstructed. It was dangerous work because it meant moving freely up and down, both where cover was and was not. It was physically heavy work because spade work in wet ground must always be that; and when the spade constantly encounters a débris of broken beams, sandbags, rifles, and other impediments, and the work has to be performed in eye-confusing alternations of black darkness and dazzling flares, it makes the whole thing doubly hard. When you add in the constant whisk of passing bullets and the smack of their striking, the shriek and shattering burst of high-explosive shells, and the drone and whirl of flying splinters, you get labour conditions removed to the utmost limit from ideal, and, to any but the men of the Sappers, well over the edge of the impossible. The work at any other time would have been gruesome and unnerving, because the gasping and groaning of the wounded hardly ceased from end to end of the captured trench, and in digging out the collapsed sections many dead Germans and some British were found blocking the vigorous thrust of the spades.

Duffy was getting 'fair fed up,' although he still worked on mechanically. He wondered vaguely what Ben Shrillett would have said to any member of the trade union that had worked a night, a day, and a night on end. He wondered, too, how Ben Shrillett would have shaped in the Royal Engineers, and, for all his cracking muscles and the back-breaking weight and unwieldiness of the wet sandbags, he had to grin at the thought of Ben, with his podgy fat fingers and his visible rotundity of waistcoat, sweating and straining there in the wetness and darkness with Death whistling past his ear and crashing in shrapnel bursts about him. The joke was too good to keep to himself, and he passed it to Beefy next time

he came near. Beefy saw the jest clearly and guffawed aloud, to the amazement of a clay-daubed infantryman who had had nothing in his mind but thoughts of death and loading and firing his rifle for hours past.

'Don't wonder Ben's agin conscription,' said Beefy; 'they might conscription 'im,' and passed on grinning.

Duffy had never looked at it in that light. He'd been anti-conscription himself, though now—mebbe—he didn't know—he wasn't so sure.

And after the trench was more or less repaired came the last and the most desperate business of all—the 'wiring' out there in the open under the eye of the soaring lights. In ones and twos during the intervals of darkness the men tumbled over the parapet, dragging stakes and coils of wire behind them. They managed to drive short stakes and run trip-wires between them without the enemy suspecting them. When a light flamed, every man dropped flat in the mud and lay still as the dead beside them till the light died. In the brief intervals of darkness they drove the stakes with muffled hammers, and ran the lengths of barbed wire between them. Heart in mouth they worked, one eye on the dimly seen hammer and stake-head, the other on the German trench, watching for the first upward trailing sparks of the flare. Plenty of men were hit of course, because, light or dark, the bullets were kept flying, but there was no pause in the work, not even to help the wounded in. If they were able to crawl they crawled, dropping flat and still while the lights burned, hitching themselves painfully toward the parapet under cover of the darkness. If they could not crawl they lay still, dragging themselves perhaps behind the cover of a dead body or lying quiet in the open till the time would come when helpers would seek them. Their turn came when the low wires were complete. The wounded were brought cautiously in to the trench then, and hoisted over the parapet; the working party was carefully detailed and each man's duty marked out before they crawled again into the open with long stakes and strands of barbed wire. The party lay there minute after minute, through periods of light and darkness, until the officer in charge thought a favourable chance had come and gave the arranged signal. Every man leaped to his feet, the stakes were planted, and quick blow after blow drove them home. Another light soared up and flared out, and every man dropped and held his breath, waiting for the crash of fire that would tell they were discovered. But the flare died

out without a sign, and the working party hurriedly renewed their task. This time the darkness held for an unusual length of time, and the stakes were planted, the wires fastened, and cross-pieces of wood with interlacings of barbed wire all ready were rolled out and pegged down without another light showing. The word passed down and the men scrambled back into safety.

'Better shoot a light up quick,' said the Engineer officer to the infantry commander. 'They have a working party out now. I heard 'em hammering. That's why they went so long without a light.'

A pistol light was fired and the two stared out into the open ground it lit. 'Thought so,' said the Engineer, pointing. 'New stakes—see? And those fellows lying beside 'em.'

'Get your tools together, Sergeant,' he said as several more lights flamed and a burst of rapid fire rose from the British rifles, 'and collect your party. Our job's done, and I'm not sorry for it.'

It was just breaking daylight when the remains of the Engineers' party emerged from the communication trench, and already the guns on both sides were beginning to talk. Beefy Wilson and Jem Duffy between them found Jigger's body and brought it as far as the Dressing Station. Behind the trenches Beefy's Company and Jem's Section took different roads, and the two old friends parted with a casual 'S'long' and 'See you again sometime.'

Duffy had two hours' sleep in a sopping wet roofless house, about three miles behind the firing line. Then the Section was roused and marched back to their billets in a shell-wrecked village, a good ten miles further back. They found what was left of the other three Sections of the Southland Company there, heard the tale of how the Company had been cut up in advancing with the charging infantry, ate a meal, scraped some of the mud off themselves, and sought their blankets and wet straw beds.

Jim Duffy could not get the thought of Ben Shrillett, labour leader and agitator, out of his mind, and mixed with his thoughts as he went to sleep were that officer's remarks about pressed men. That perhaps accounts for his waking thoughts running in the same groove when his Sergeant roused him at black midnight and informed him the Section was being turned out—to dig trenches.

'Trenches?' spluttered Sapper Duffy. '... us? How is it our turn again?'

'Becos, my son,' said the Sergeant, 'there's nobody else about 'ere to take a turn. Come on! Roll out! Show a leg!'

It was then that Sapper Duffy was finally converted, and renounced for ever and ever his anti-conscription principles.

'Nobody else,' he said slowly, 'an' England fair stiff wi' men. . . . The sooner we get Conscription, the better I'll like it. Conscription solid for every bloomin' able-bodied man an' boy. An' I 'ope Ben Shrillett an' 'is likes is the first to be took. Conscription,' he said with the emphasis of finality as he fumbled in wet straw for a wetter boot, 'out-an'-out, lock, stock, 'n barrel Conscription.'

That same night Ben Shrillett was presiding at a meeting of the Strike Committee. He had read on the way to the meeting the communiqué that told briefly of Sapper Duffy and his fellow Engineers' work of the night before, and the descriptive phrase struck him as sounding neat and effective. He worked it now into his speech to the Committee, explaining how and where they and he benefited by this strike, unpopular as it had proved.

'We've vindicated the rights of the workers,' he said. 'We've shown that, war or no war, Labour means to be more than mere wage-slaves. War can't last for ever, and we here, this Committee, proved ourselves by this strike the true leaders and the Champions of Labour, the Guardians of the Rights of Trade Unionism. We, gentlemen, have always been that, and by the strike—' and he concluded with the phrase from the despatch—'we have maintained and consolidated our position.'

The Committee said, 'Hear, hear.' It is a pity they could not have heard what Sapper Duffy was saying as he sat up in his dirty wet straw, listening to the rustle and patter of rain on the barn's leaky roof and tugging on an icy-cold board-stiff boot.

RUFUS CHOATE—ADVOCATE.

BY HIS HONOUR JUDGE PARRY.

RUFUS CHOATE was to America the typical great advocate. As Curran was to Ireland, as Erskine was to England, so was Choate to America; greater than Pinkney, Prentiss, Hoffman, or even Daniel Webster himself. Richard H. Dana voiced the feeling of the American Bar in a memorable tribute to his memory when he said: 'The great conqueror, unseen and irresistible, has broken into our temple and has carried off the vessels of gold, the vessels of silver, the precious stones, and the ivory, and we must content ourselves hereafter with vessels of wood and stone and iron.'

Rufus Choate was born in Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1799, and died a barrister, having refused judicial honours, at the early age of sixty. From his youth upward he was devoted to advocacy. He lived for his profession, and never ceased to be an earnest student of his art. For him jurisprudence was, in Justinian's phrase, 'the knowledge of things divine and human, the science of what is just and unjust.' He was a very widely read man; but everything he learned and read he adapted to the uses of advocacy. He was enthusiastic in his love of his trade. He had often on his lips the words of Archbishop Hooker: 'Of law no less can be said than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the spheres; all things in heaven and earth do her reverence: the greatest as needing her protection, the meanest as not afraid of her power.' When a young student remarked to him that the study of law became less dry as one learned to know more about it, and that a man might absolutely learn to like it, he replied with generous impatience: 'Like it! there is nothing else to like in all the world.'

Choate was, however, not only a natural and gifted advocate, but a man who had devoted every hour of industry to the profession he loved. From earliest schooldays he was a great reader, doing little in the football-field; and yet through the lovable nature of the boy he was not separated from his schoolfellows through pedantry or conceit. Throughout life he would insist that 'in literature you find ideas; there one should daily replenish his stock.' He was a careful reader of the English Bible, and quoted from it constantly in speaking. All the speeches of the English

orators were well known to him, and he regarded Grattan with great admiration, though Brougham he would not admit to be a real orator. He was equally widely read in history, poetry, and the classics. 'Soak your mind with Cicero,' was a favourite phrase of his in giving advice to the younger generation of law students.

But we must not suppose that these miscellaneous pursuits were indulged in to the neglect of his mistress, the law. It is not easy to find in legal biography instances of greater devotion to the study of the law. He carried out Lord Eldon's maxim, and knew what it was 'to live like a hermit and work like a horse'; and both in length of hours and—what is of far greater importance—interest and attention to the meaning of what he read, he was a model student. Thus when as a young man of twenty-four he entered the Courts, it was said of him that he was a 'full-grown lawyer, jurist, advocate, and, more than all, *man* at the start.'

He was a great believer in reading with a pen in hand that notes might be made without delay of new discoveries. Literature he read for ideas, words, and phrases to fill out and decorate his orations. Law he read as the foundation of his life-work with an energy and enthusiasm that never slackened. Only a few years before his death, a friend found him poring over a folio. 'I am reading over again Coke upon Littleton,' he said. 'He is an enthusiast in the old law, and I want him to inspire my enthusiasm; for it would be dreadful, you know, to lose one's interest in the profession to which a man is going to devote the last ten years of his life.' One cannot picture to oneself an advocate of to-day burnishing his well-to-do wits with Coke upon Littleton.

The stories of the industry and energy of Rufus Choate are very inspiring, but they do not solve for us the interesting problem of the sources of his power as an advocate. The advocate, like the actor, passes out of the world's ken when his last speech is made. Now and then you get one of the audience gifted, like Charles Lamb, to describe to you in a few words what the actor really was like, and his portrait remains for all time. Such records are rare about actors, and still rarer about advocates. You have their reported speeches; but the method of delivery, the voice, gesture, and soul, whereby the advocate endowed his speech with life, beauty, and force—these things can only be gathered by our own imagination through dull second-hand histories.

Of the personal appearance of an advocate something may be learned by portraits or engravings. I feel sure that it is advisable for an advocate to be good-looking, and therefore I feel sure Rufus

Choate must have been good-looking in some kind of way, though the pictures I have seen of him are not convincing. That he had a striking personality is undoubted. 'No one who ever saw him could ever forget him,' was said of him more than once. Edward Parker, his faithful pupil, writing with Sancho-like fidelity of the fascinating beauty of his youth, speaks of 'that dark, Spanish, Hidalgo-looking head, covered with thick raven curls, which the daughters of the black-eyed races might have envied; and the flash of his own sad eyes, sad but burning with Italian intensity.'

From this portrait we may turn to the rough caricature of a Yankee 'down-easter,' if we desire to see something of the advocate himself as he appeared to the crowd at the back of the Court who flocked in to listen to his orations.

'Rufus Choate is a picture to look at, and a crowder to spout. He is about seven feet six, or six feet seven, in his socks, supple as an eel, and wiry as a cork-screw. His face is a compound of wrinkles, "yaller janders," and jurisprudence. He has small, keen, piercing black eyes, and a head shaped like a mammoth goose-egg, big end up; his hair black and curly, much resembling a bag of wool in "admirable disorder," or a brush-heap in a gale of wind. His body has no particular shape, and his wit and legal "dodges" have set many a judge in a snicker, and so confounded jurors as to make it almost impossible for them to speak plain English.

'Rufus is great on twisting and coiling himself up, squirming around, and prancing, jumping, and kicking up the dust, when steam's up. His oratory is first-rate, and his arguments ingenious and forcible. He generally makes a ten-strike¹—judge and jury down—at the end of every sentence. He is great on flowery expressions and high falootin "flub-dubs." Strangers mostly think he is crazy, and the rest scarcely understand what it is about. He has been in the Senate, and may be, if he has time to fish for it, President of the United States. He invoices his time and eloquence four thousand per cent. over ordinary charges for having one's self put through a course of law. Rufus Choate is about fifty years of age, perhaps over. He is considered the ablest lawyer in New England, or perhaps in the United States.'

The writer of this was evidently a man of discernment, for if there were a weak point in Choate's advocacy it was his fondness of 'flub-dubs,' if, as I gather, these are high-sounding words of low-sense power. He delighted in 'long-tailed words in -osity and

¹ In America, the game of nine-pins being prohibited, the game of ten-pins took its place. A 'ten-strike' is a ball that knocks down all the pins: Hans Breitmann refers to the joy of making a ten-strike.

-ation,' and these he would drag in, however humble the theme on which he was speaking. Moreover, alliteration had a great fascination for him. Thus, on a celebrated occasion in a very trumpety case, he described some harness that his client had sold as 'a safe, sound, substantial, suitable, second-rate, second-hand harness.' Albert Terrell, a decadent whom he defended for murder, was 'this fond, foolish, fickle, fated, and infatuated Albert.'

But one must not suppose these are fair samples of his style. The English of his orations is generally pure and of a literary flavour. He began in the true school. At a very early age—some say six years old—he could recite pages of 'Pilgrim's Progress' and chapters of the Bible. Throughout his life he read, as we have said, pen in hand in order to increase his vocabulary and add to his knowledge of language. A speaker he thought should 'daily exercise and air his vocabulary and seek to add to and enrich it.' He was a great classical scholar, and well read in literature; but he had also a love of dictionaries, and would study them for the purpose of 'filling up and fertilising his diction.' These experiments led him into strange verbal adventures.

A good story is told of one Mr. Justice Wilde, who, being dry, precise, and formal in his methods, little appreciated the whirlwind eloquence of Choate. On one occasion, just before the opening of Court, when Choate was to argue a case, and they were waiting for him, a member of the Bar asked the judge if he had heard that Mr. Worcester had just published a new edition of his dictionary with a great number of additional words in it.

'No!' replied Mr. Justice Wilde, 'I have not heard of it. But for Heaven's sake don't tell Choate.'

But although the exuberance of his verbosity was at times wearisome to his professional brethren the juries were never tired of listening to him, and the public crowded in to hear his speeches. He laboured all his days to obtain the full feeling and sense of words spoken in advocacy, and the testimony of those who heard him is overwhelming that to have been in Court with Rufus Choate when, to use his own phrase, he 'got his throat open,' must have been a glorious experience.

There was no following in his footsteps, and many tried to discount the moral effect of his flights of eloquence by a studied humility of style. The best instance of such an effort was an opening by one Jeremiah Mason, a witty member of the Bar, who, when Choate after a magnificent oration had thrown himself exhausted on the bench,

arose with blunt, homely smiling cunning, and in a broad accent, said: 'Gentlemen of the jury, I don't know as I can *gyrate* afore you as my brother Choate does; but I want to just state a few pints.'

Choate was a great defender of prisoners. He had none of that hesitation that has burdened the minds of some advocates as to how far it was the duty of an advocate to undertake a case he did not believe in. In his view 'a counsel ought not to think anything about or know anything about whether his client is right or not; he ought only to think what can legitimately legally be said for him—what, according to the accepted principles of our law, is the legal defence.' In this he followed the principles of Brougham and Erskine. But though of sturdy independence and no respecter of persons, in his attitude towards the Bench and his opponents, especially his juniors, he was a model advocate. Until the case was actually opened he was a most uncertain starter, and his juniors' chief and most arduous duty was to get him into Court. Once there, and when like a tiger he had tasted blood, nothing would drag him from the contest.

Records say, and probably with truth, that he was a wonderful advocate with juries. His methods were sound, and a young advocate might do worse than read and consider his ways. The jury to him was the elemental substance of a real trial. He cherished with tenacious affection the origin, history, and functions of a jury—in which matters he was nobly learned. He loved to discourse on the necessity of the agreement of the twelve, the presumption of innocence, the right of cross-examination, and the open hearing in Court with almost theological fervour. It was small wonder, then, that the actual twelve men he addressed found themselves transubstantiated from twelve common men into a great social and historic entity. As one writer says: 'He did not argue very many great cases, but he made many little ones great.' For the keynote of his success in advocacy was his eternal sincerity—a deep, great genuine sincerity. When this and his natural and acquired gifts are once understood, passages descriptive of his speaking that sound like hyperbole may be indeed even short of the truth.

The Reverend Dr. Hitchcock, President of the Union Theological Seminary in New York, whose friendship with Choate began in the pleasant hunting-ground of an antiquarian book-store, has left behind a fine picture of the charm of his eloquence.

'Certainly,' he writes, 'Rufus Choate seldom failed to carry his point with any jury, or any popular assembly. He caught men up

and swept them along, as the wind sweeps leaves and dust. Whoever seeks to know the secret of this will find it pre-eminently in the innermost essential character of the man. He was pure, and just, and true, and tender, so that whatever he said commended, and still commends, itself to what is best and highest in our common nature. He was not only thoroughly good, but his goodness was fine and chivalric. The fascination was moral. The heart was captured first, and after that the imagination. His marvellous fertility of invention, wealth of allusion, and swift succession of inimitable felicities of thought and diction never seemed like devices to blind and betray the judgment, but came as naturally as the bloom of fruit-trees, or the foam of crested waves. His voice was one of a thousand, of ten thousand rather, now like a flute for softness, and now like a clarion.'

One of his wise sayings to his younger friends was: 'That in a speech to a jury the first moments were the great moments for the advocate. Then the attention is all on the alert, the ears are quicker, the mind receptive.' A jury, he urged, at the beginning want to know what your case is about; they try and get hold of your leading notion. At the outset you want to strike into their minds a good solid general view of your case. To those who have watched a jury, all eagerness at first, dropping their attention as they are overwhelmed with dates and facts and extracts from letters instead of a broad statement of the case, Choate's advice seems worth recalling. 'If,' he said emphatically, 'you haven't got hold of them, got their convictions at least open, in your first half-hour or hour, you will never get at them at all.' Truly Choate had much to teach that some of us have still to learn.

In the same way he had a real detestation of riding several horses at once and never quite knowing which he was on. In every case he sought after the real point of the case, and had one central commanding theory. Then in weaving and winding the threads of facts he made his theory the hub around which everything had to revolve. This, too, is an eternal fact of advocacy which is apt to be forgotten in these hustled days.

As a cross-examiner, too, he had the gist of the matter in him. He never assaulted a witness or browbeat him, well understanding human nature and knowing that by unmannerly violence he would only arouse sympathy in the minds of the jury with the witness rather than the advocate. But he had his own methods of dealing with the evil-doer, and of one such it is told us that 'he did not call him hard names, but covered him over with an oily sarcasm so that

the jury did not care to look at him. In other words, he was slain politely and laid out to dry.'

Like all great cross-examiners, he never asked many questions. As he told a student: "Never cross-examine more than is absolutely necessary. If you don't break your witness he breaks you; for he only repeats over in stronger language to the jury his story. Thus you only give him a second chance to tell his story to them. And, besides, by some random question you may draw out something damaging to your own case. This last is a frightful liability.' Yet how often do members of the Bar cheerfully ruin their clients by a slovenly cross-examination without even the plausible excuse of youth and inexperience!

And another sound truth in matters of cross-examination which he put with amusing exaggeration to a favourite junior is worth remembering. 'Let me,' he said with humorous solemnity, 'give you my dying advice—never cross-examine a woman. It is of no use. They cannot disintegrate the story they have once told; they cannot eliminate the part that is for you from that which is against you. They can neither combine, nor shade, nor qualify. They go for the whole thing; and the moment you begin to cross-examine one of them, instead of being bitten by a single rattlesnake, you are bitten by a whole barrel full. I never, excepting in a case absolutely desperate, dare to cross-examine a woman.' It was another wise American who said: 'Live always in the fear of God; but if that slides, continue in the fear of Woman.'

Of course, on occasion, Choate would meet with his Sam Weller. Defending a prisoner for theft of money from a ship, a witness was called who had turned States evidence and whose testimony went to prove that Choate's client had instigated the theft.

'Well,' asked Choate, 'what did he say? Tell us how and what he spoke to you.'

'Why,' said the witness, 'he told us there was a man in Boston named Choate and he'd get us off if they caught us with the money in our boots.'

But Choate was not the man to grumble at an occasional knock, especially if it were a witty one, for he dearly loved a jest and was brimful of wit and humour which he could use himself with good effect.

In a case tried before a judge of the United States District Court, Choate, in his address to the jury, alluded to certain rumours as set afloat by a party's enemies.

'You mustn't assume that, Mr. Choate,' interrupted the Court; 'there's no evidence that he has enemies.'

'He's in large business and must have made foes,' said Choate impatiently.

'There's no evidence,' replied the judge, 'that he's in business. He's a physician.'

'Well, then,' replied Choate instantly, with a roguish smile, 'he's a physician, and the friends of the people he's killed by his practice are his enemies.'

And as the laughter of judge and all in Court died away Choate was returning to the matter in hand and pressing forward his point.

You could fill a book of anecdotes with Choate stories, but these tales of bygone wit baldly remembered seem too often to have lost their savour. One wants the voice and the manner, the accent and occasion of their utterance.

I like that saying of his about Judge Shaw. 'I always approach Judge Shaw as a savage approaches his fetish: knowing that he is ugly, but feeling that he is great.' That is distinctly witty to-day; but how delightful it must have been to have known Judge Shaw and to have heard Rufus say it in the robing-room!

He seems to have had the Charles Lamb touch in some of his quaint inverted thoughts of wit. Coming into a lawyer's office he saw a narrow winding staircase leading up to the consulting-room. He looked wonderingly at its corkscrew curvings, and, turning to the lawyer, meditatively observed: 'Dear me! How drunk a man must be to go up those stairs!'

Again, at a season of illness, a friend of Choate visited him and urged him to pay more attention to his health.

'Sir,' said the visitor, 'you must go away; if you continue your professional labours, you will certainly undermine your constitution.'

Choate looked up with grave irony and replied: 'Sir, the constitution was destroyed long ago; I am now living under the by-laws.'

And of the rougher American humour he had his share too. Speaking to some young advocates of the misery of losing cases, he told them they must remember their ministerial positions and accept defeat philosophically and be ready to go on with the next.

'When a case has gone against me,' he said, 'I feel like the Baptist minister who was baptizing in winter a crowd of converts through a hole made in the ice. One brother—Jones I think—dis-

appeared after immersion and did not reappear, probably he had drifted ten or fifteen feet from the hole and was vainly gasping under ice as many inches thick. After pausing a few minutes the minister said: "Brother Jones has evidently gone to Kingdom Come: bring on the next!"

Of Choate the citizen, many interesting things might be written in praise of his works and days, but this is only an attempt to picture Choate the advocate. And of advocacy, as of acting, that which has happened and passed away is mostly beyond recall. We read of Rufus Choate as he 'strode the streets with majestic step,' we accept in faith the records of the marvellous music of his voice, the flashing glance of his dark eye and his bewitching smile, but we must sadly own that these memories of hearsay are not evidence and scarcely bring conviction to our legal minds.

This, however, we can ascertain—that in Rufus Choate we have for all time the example of a noble advocate. Ruskin tells us that 'the chords of music, the harmonies of colour, the general principles of the arrangement of sculptured masses have been determined long ago and in all probability cannot be added to, any more than they can be altered.' And if this be true of the greater arts it is certainly not untrue of advocacy. Rufus Choate devoted his life to the study of the principles of the great profession he adorned, and, without forgoing any liberty that genius and originality suggested to his mind, kept steadily before him the duties and limitations of the art of which he was a master. Doubtless there have been more outstanding figures at the Bar, men of greater position and larger influence. There has been none that I have read of who brought to his work a wider love and a more noble industry. His enthusiastic affection for all that his profession meant to him is best expressed in his own words to a friend who begged him in his last illness to take a vacation.

'Ah, my dear fellow!' he said with playful sadness, 'the lawyer's vacation is the space between the question put and the answer.'

ALONG THE FIGHTING LINE.

EVERY Englishman has, as his birthright, a little patch of English country that, no matter where he may wander, he will always consider as peculiarly his own. The writer claims as his birthright a Hampshire wood, where for thirty years he was free to wander at his own free will, and where in April the ground was white with anemones, and he might be sure of hearing the first cuckoo of the year. It was in the very image of this wood that he was wandering a little while ago.

Frail anemones were swaying to and fro in a fitful breeze, and insects, many and bright-coloured, were busy among the opening spring flowers. Jays were chattering and scolding in the undergrowth, furious at our intrusion; and it was there for the first time this year that I heard the call of the cuckoo. Here and there a tree had already burst into leaf, and everywhere the buds were swelling with the coming of the spring. The wood and its inhabitants seemed to be living their lives alone, happy without human interference; and to the wanderer fresh from Paris, with his eyes blinded by its beauty, his sense of smell deadened by its spring fragrance, and his ears deafened to everything but nature, by the whispering of the wind in the branches and the pleasant conversation of the birds, it seemed a Paradise on earth.

Yet beneath all the little murmurings of animal life, the sighing of the wind, and the clear notes of the cuckoo, there was a formidable undercurrent of tempestuous sound, the deafening thunder of modern war. Sometimes, if the hearer's mind was rightly attuned, it was drowned by the peaceful woodland whispers; but a minute later it would return with self-assertive violence, and nothing was audible except the ear-splitting crash of cannon, and the whirring rush of shells tearing open the air as telegraph wires split the wind asunder.

For this wood with its flowers, and birds, and chequered shadows, was not a peaceful South Country coppice, but a vital strategical point uniting the French fighting line in Champagne with the Forest of the Argonne. It was pushed forward northwards, like a wedge, into the German lines, and even on its southern boundary we were between the second and third lines of the French defence.

We had been brought there by military motor-cars that dashed along at breakneck speed, past the little undulating hills of the Champagne Pouilleuse, which is almost a desert, and where, outside the zone of the rich vineyards of the real Champagne, the peasant makes a precarious living by incessant toil. The ground was white and barren, torn here and there with great conical shell-holes; and the only relief to its melancholy desolation, under the hot spring sun, was given by little plantations of fir-trees that still seemed cool and fresh, though they had been ruthlessly laid waste by German shell and the axes of the French engineers.

On our right stretched out the great forest of the Argonne, still brown and leafless, though already its trees had taken on that rich reddish glow which tells of swelling buds. From its forest fastnesses there came the intermittent boom of distant guns.

For some time we had known that we must be rapidly approaching the enemy's lines, as the countryside suddenly became deserted. Convoys had disappeared from the roads, and there was not even a sentry to challenge us. In the rear there had been the unending coming and going of a vast multitude, and country roads had been as crowded as a Paris street; but within range of the enemy's guns there was a great loneliness, and it seemed that it was an invisible host which barred the way to the invader.

At the last village, a mere heap of shapeless ruins, the Major in command of our party had ordered the motor-cars to keep several hundred yards apart, so as not to attract the German fire, for unseen hostile eyes kept an unfailing watch on the road by which we went. We drew up just below the crest of a hill, for further on the position was too exposed; and while we set out to walk through the wood on our right towards the first line of defence, the cars took cover in a small fir coppice on the left of the road.

Though there was no board with the familiar 'Trespassers will be prosecuted' to warn us off, it was with something of the adventurous feeling of the trespasser that we plunged into the undergrowth. Around us, flowers, birds, and insects were rejoicing in the coming of the spring, as though humanity and its universal war mattered not at all; the jays were more annoyed by our appearance than by the cannonade, which as we advanced became more and more noisy and incessant, and the cuckoo took advantage of each lull to mock the violence of man.

We had not walked far before we began to discover that our wood was not so ordinary as it seemed at first sight. Trees and

undergrowth had been cut down in a strange and arbitrary fashion, such as no skilled and tidy forester would suffer. In some places large clearings had been made, and every tree and every vestige of undergrowth had been mercilessly swept away; elsewhere only trees and saplings of a certain size had been sacrificed, and their branches had been lopped off and left tangled with the thick brushwood; sometimes not a tree or a sapling had been touched, and the wood was as impenetrable as Nature could make it.

The explanation of this ragged unevenness was given by an artificial hedge at the edge of a clearing. A row of branches stuck upright in the ground served to conceal this open space from the enemy's observation. As a general rule the trees and underwood had only been cut down when they were useless as a screen, while they had been carefully preserved at every point which could be overlooked by the enemy.

Then the paths of this wood were curious. Though the place seemed uninhabited, and but for the sound of the guns miles and miles from human life, every path, whether it was a main track or a little winding side-path, such as keepers make to a snare, had been carefully paved with stout branches and saplings, neatly fitted together and laid one against the other, like the ribs in corduroy. It was such work as children might attempt, to pass dry-foot over a yard or two of swampy ground, and then leave unfinished when it had whiled away an idle hour. But here one walked for miles—not on earth, or moss, or trampled grass—but on these wooden paths.

A few days ago the whole countryside was a morass, and to enable the men to move about and bring up supplies without sinking over the knees in mud, the whole wood had been laid out with a complete system of these rustic causeways. Where the mud was particularly deep thicker saplings had been used, and occasionally portions of tree-trunks of considerable girth. The sun had dried the chalky ground with amazing rapidity, but though the paths of 'corduroy' or 'rondins,' as the French call them, do not make for comfortable walking, a glance at the caked mud all round showed how invaluable they must have been during the winter.

The wood had been marked out like a great game with streets and avenues and boulevards, their names all neatly written up on rough-hewn boards. If you follow the Rue de la Victoire and turn into the Rue de la Paix, a thoroughfare at least a foot broad, without falling into the ditch along which it runs, you will be able to rest at

the Carrefour des Blagueurs ('The Jokers' Crossroads'), or continue your journey by the Boulevard Niel, a street that is very properly marked as 'interdit aux cavaliers,' since a horse would have small chance of keeping his footing on it for a minute. When you reach the Rue George V. you will know that the Boches are only a few hundred yards away.

Occasionally one would find a part of the wood which seemed to have been the centre of a local typhoon. Trees had been split and snapped asunder, and large branches strewn about the place in utter disorder. A glance at the ground would discover the splinters of the shell that had done the mischief.

The Germans had been trying to find with their projectiles one of those rustic observation stations which are so valuable for the direction of artillery fire. A rough-hewn ladder, nailed insecurely to a tall tree, leads up to a small and giddy platform, provided with a telephone which seems as improbable in a lonely wood as Peter Pan's little house among the tree-tops of the forest.

At last we reached the cottage which served as headquarters to the officer commanding the wood. Its position the Germans have never been able to discover, and it is so well concealed that they are never likely to do so. Its one living room was decorated with an alarming ancestral portrait, a photograph of General Joffre, and a picture postcard of a ballet dancer, and its furniture was distinctly primitive, but for soldiers on active service its bed, table, and rickety rush chairs were luxury.

Its owner was very proud of his house, but perforce he abandoned it before the German advance. He had very little hope of seeing it again; but a month or so ago he came back to it for an hour or two, and was overjoyed to find it intact in the hands of the French troops.

'I have come back for my overcoat,' he told the officer in command. 'I felt sure that my house had been destroyed, but I said to myself, "If it is still in existence, that overcoat would be very useful and would save me buying a new one."'

He departed, rejoicing, with his overcoat, after making a special request that his rather nondescript collection of crockery might be treated as tenderly as possible. If it was spared by German shells, he did not want it broken by a soldier servant's clumsiness. It was in his crockery that tea was served, while we revelled in the cool after our long and thirsty walk. The teapot was a cracked salad bowl, and its contents were ladled out with a soup ladle. There was either a more or less broken tumbler, or a fragmentary cup, or

a tin mug for each of us, and we were all agreed that we had never tasted anything more refreshing.

While we sat and rested, the officers tried to teach us to distinguish between an 'arrivée' and a 'départ,' the 'arrivée' being the arrival and explosion of a German shell in the French lines, and the 'départ' the departure of a French shell from the cannon's mouth on its errand of destruction. There was a French battery of 75's not far from us, pounding away indefatigably at the German positions, while the Germans, in their efforts to locate the battery annoying them, were firing projectiles of varying sizes that were falling about half a mile away.

The violence of the detonations made the little house tremble to its foundations. There would come three ear-splitting reports in quick succession, each followed by the rushing whir of a shell.

'Voilà un départ,' said the officers. 'That is the way our 75's talk French.'

A minute later these sharp cracks of the 75's would be followed by an uncomfortable whistling sound of something hurtling through the air, more or less in our direction; sometimes, if the shell were a heavy one, the sound as it approached would become an unsteady, droning buzz, as though the projectile was wobbling uneasily in its course. Then there would come a dull, heavy detonation.

'Voilà une arrivée,' said the officers; 'cannot you recognise the guttural German?'

When we pushed on again towards the front trenches, everything was peaceful, except for the cannonade. The wood was as deserted as ever, until in its very heart we reached the quarters of the men who are always held in readiness to reinforce the first line of defence. Trees and undergrowth were at their densest, and under their protecting shade stood a long row of picturesque huts; all around them hundreds of men were working or resting.

Modern warfare is full of these violent contrasts. Whole armies are hidden so cunningly from the aviator's far-seeing eye that they are invisible, until suddenly one falls right upon them. Without warning, one plunges from the loneliness of a forest into the animation of a large encampment.

The huts, despite their size and solid structure, were in keeping with their environment, and one could have passed them by, only a few yards away, without any idea that they were there. Towards the enemy their walls were of enormous thickness, huge buttresses of earth held together by hurdles, and backed with tree-trunks and

still more earth and hurdles. Their roofs, also, which were equally solid, consisted of earth, hurdles, and tree-trunks, with a sheet of corrugated iron to keep out the damp, the corrugated iron being carefully buried under earth and branches, lest it should attract the aviator.

These shelters, which are an adaptation of the backwoodsman's log cabin, can take a good-sized shell with impunity. Elsewhere, as a rule, protection has been obtained by digging, but fighting on this portion of the front has an exceptional character. Water is found so near the surface of the soil that trenches and underground refuges are out of the question. Since it is hopeless to burrow, the soldier has to throw up his defences above the ground, and to build great walls and ramparts capable of resisting the impact of a large projectile.

The soldiers who live in these rustic fortresses declare themselves well satisfied with their cosy quarters ; it is no small thing in time of war to have a bunk well filled with clean straw to sleep in. Some of them were at work building new huts, while others were sitting round tables that were made of hurdles raised on sticks and tree-stumps, taking their mid-day meal. In their uniforms there was no uniformity. They were dressed in stuffs of many kinds and many hues, ranging from the labourer's corduroy to the latest invisible cloth of atmospheric blue—a cheerful, healthy-looking set of men, who had scarcely seen a civilian during the last six months, and who greeted our unexpected appearance as an amusing break in the monotony of their lives.

After an exchange of chaff and greetings we set on again, and soon found ourselves on the edge of the wood. An artificial hedge of withered fir-branches, a distinctly frail obstacle to rifle bullets, protected the passer-by from the observation of the enemy a few hundred yards away. The hedge ended at a point where two solid walls of earth met at right angles. On our right we looked down a line of loopholed ramparts, glittering white in the sun with the eternal chalk of the Champagne Pouilleuse ; sentries, in pale sky-blue uniforms that seemed to fade away into the whiteness of the soil, were stationed at the loopholes, and were watching untiringly, with their rifle-butts pressed to their shoulders, ready for any movement on the other side of the valley.

At this point of the front the French position formed a wedge driven into the enemy's lines, and its outline followed the course of a stream and its tributary in the valley below, that divided the

opposing armies. Our destination was the extreme point of this wedge, known as La Sapinière, the Pine Clump. To reach it we went straight on, with a great wall on our right hand.

The walls, like the shelters, were made of earth, hurdles, and tree-trunks. They were about eight feet high, with a lower wall, rather like a shop counter, running a foot or two behind to provide protection against splinters from shells bursting in the rear. The whole length of the wall was loopholed; sentries were standing at regular intervals, and in each vacant loophole there lay two rifles ready for use at the first alarm.

The sentries stood motionless as statues, with their eyes fixed on the strip of ground that was visible through their loopholes. It was not an interesting view!—hundreds of wooden posts with barbed wire entanglements between them, and a few yards of white chalky soil which dropped away suddenly down to the stream below. Then, on the other side of the valley, a similar slope equally white and barren, where the Germans lay concealed; and the shattered church tower of a ruined village which was one of their strongholds.

At one point the wall gave place to a low bank and a rather scanty hedge. Here we had to pass not more than two at a time, so as not to draw the enemy's fire, while a notice advised us to keep well to the left. The Germans, however, did not think a party of Russian and English journalists worthy even of a bullet.

This gap once passed, we found ourselves in La Sapinière, the extreme point of the position. It was a thick shady grove of fir-trees which formed a practically impervious screen. Outside it was hot sunshine, and the noise of the guns was very loud and incessant. Inside all was cool and peaceful, and the cannonade seemed suddenly very far away; half-drowned by the sighing of the wind in the branches above, it was scarcely more than the murmuring of a distant sea on a pebbly beach.

Among the tree-trunks was a village of little houses such as are always found in the forest of a fairy tale. Men were walking about quietly, placidly engaged in their ordinary occupations, as though there was no such thing as war, and as though for their own pleasure they had chosen to camp out in this pleasant pine-wood. A group of men working hard at digging a well seemed to be making light of their toil and to be regarding it as part of a game. A funny little wooden letter-box, nailed to a branch, announced that the post left at noon each day; and a notice

threatened with untold penalties anyone who should commit the crime of cutting down a tree in La Sapinière.

A week or two back things were very different. Then the men were struggling night and day with their relentless enemy, mud, which had made their lives a burden. But now the spring sun had conquered, the nightmare of the winter was forgotten, and every man's face expressed a lively satisfaction.

Not that La Sapinière is always so peaceful a spot. On the contrary, it is very often an exceedingly warm corner, exposed to a converging fire. For an ever-watchful enemy is close at hand, and by day and night death is lurking in the faint white lines, ploughed like a furrow along the hill-slope, where the German trenches are.

A few of the trees have been torn and split by shell-fire, but it is only as if a storm had passed, and it is hard to realise how exposed the position is. And yet, as an officer said, 'when the Germans have nothing better to do, they throw shrapnel on La Sapinière, and then it is anything but a healthy residence.'

As we walked back behind the lines, the delusion of peace and tranquillity still persisted, although the violence of the guns had redoubled. A brimstone butterfly fluttered over the oxlips that grew in profusion along a little ditch, and a bright green beetle sunned itself in a patch of moss. I only saw one living thing that was afraid, a brown linnet which suddenly rose from a bush and flew about in a state of wild alarm after a particularly loud explosion.

The sun was low on the horizon when we reached the automobiles. A long black storm-cloud hid its disc, and its rays, pouring down from behind the veil, spread a fiery sea of dazzling radiance over the western horizon, making the hills stand out black and stark as though their outline was all their substance, like paste-board scenery in a theatre. Suddenly marking out a diamond against the blackness of the cloud, there appeared four little puffs of fleecy white smoke, which held together, for all the world like balls of cotton-wool suspended in mid-air.

'Shrapnel!' exclaimed an officer. 'They are firing at one of our aeroplanes.'

Intently we gazed up into the liquid gold of the evening haze, and for a long time we could see nothing but the little white clouds of smoke and the great black cloud behind them. Then suddenly, as the image rises on a photographic plate under the developer, we became aware of the enemy's target. Framed in the very centre

of the diamond were two faint parallel lines, the wings of a French biplane.

Silently, and as it seemed miraculously, fresh puffs of smoke formed themselves inside the diamond nearer and nearer to the aeroplane. Our ears had grown accustomed to the cannonade as though it were silence, the normal substratum to every sound, and in its uproar the reports of the anti-aircraft guns were inaudible.

The enemy was shooting well, and the biplane swerved hastily away towards its own lines, having, as we knew afterwards, accomplished its purpose. In a few seconds it vanished, swallowed up in the colours of the sunset.

Next day we met the aviator. Three shrapnel bullets had passed through the body of his machine. When we saw him he was picking one of them out in an absent-minded way, taking as much interest in it as a man might show in a pebble that he had shaken out of his boot. His mind was entirely occupied with a grievance. One of the bombs he had dropped on the enemy's lines had failed to explode, and he kept saying over and over again, 'What I want to know is who is the unspeakable idiot that manufactures the rotten things!' It was nothing to him that the shrapnel had found no vital part, nor was he in the least consoled because the rest of his bombs had exploded just where and when they were intended to.

It was fated that that evening, before we returned to Châlons-sur-Marne, we were to witness a still more exciting battle in the air. Scarcely had the biplane disappeared when two fresh aeroplanes came into sight. The wind, which had been gusty all day, had dropped with the westering sun, and the aviators of both sides were determined to make the most of the evening calm. One of these machines was a German biplane flying southward towards the French lines, the other a French biplane northward bound.

Which aviator sighted the other first it was impossible to tell, but suddenly it became clear to the spectators below that a silent challenge had passed between them. The two aeroplanes sped each towards the other, and neither aviator shrank from the ordeal of single combat 5,000 feet above the ground.

A general stopped his automobile and, standing up, watched the mortal struggle through his glasses. Soldiers by the roadside stood still and shouted to their comrades: 'Come and look. *C'est la chasse aux Taubes.*'

Meantime the storm-cloud was becoming more and more dark and threatening, and the rift into infinite distance below it more

golden and more fire-like. Puffs of bursting shrapnel showed that from the ground either side was seeking to aid its champion. The two aeroplanes towered, each seeking to rise above its enemy. It was a battle between two well-matched adversaries eager to play the game where the stake is life or death. Up they went in spirals, like falcon and heron, and it seemed to us that the Frenchman held the advantage.

The lower rim of the sun's disc had fallen beneath the ragged edge of the cloud, and all the west was burning with the splendour of fire. Against the glory of the sunset we on the ground below saw the outline of a monoplane, graceful as a dragon-fly, darting forward towards the battle in that straight unswerving line that only winged things can follow. At the same moment, out of the nothingness of dazzling light, appeared another biplane darting towards the same goal. In a few seconds it was clear that the newcomers were French. Help was coming to the Frenchman from the sunset clouds.

The German struggled on gallantly, until he saw the odds against him. Then, game to the last, he tried with a bold sweep to draw his enemy within range of the guns below. But it was too late. From the French biplane, while the shrapnel burst round it unheeded, came flash upon flash: the mitrailleuse was speaking. The German aeroplane quivered a little and then began to fall, struggling like a wounded bird to right itself. For a second it recovered itself, and then it plunged headlong downwards, faster and faster, until it vanished from our sight, behind the black screen of forest-trees that fringed the horizon.

The next day the official *communiqué* announced: 'Our aviators brought down a German aeroplane in Champagne.'

In the front trenches, machine-gun, rifle, and bayonet are reinforced for close-quarters work by a great variety of bomb-throwers and hand grenades. We were permitted by the courtesy of General de Langle de Cary to witness a special demonstration of these ingenious contrivances which have been improvised during ten months of warfare. The hand grenades used by the French army are of two kinds; the one, heavier, is used for defensive purposes and thrown from the trenches on an attacking force; the other, lighter and more handy, is employed by storming parties and thrown into the enemy's trenches. Their appearance may be roughly described as resembling a rocket with an abnormally large head, containing the explosives, and a very short stick.

The 'grenadier' lights the fuse from his cigarette and, after counting two, hurls it at the enemy, when it explodes with great violence, scattering splinters and *mitraille* in all directions. As a reply to the asphyxiating gases used by the Germans, grenades have been manufactured filled with a chemical substance which, though it is innocuous, causes such irritation of the eye and nose passages that it blinds a man with tears and sneezing, and incapacitates him for several minutes.

I saw two of these grenades thrown as an experiment down a narrow lane. A company of infantry was ordered to advance over them, and it was comical to see how the men, when the fumes reached them, stopped dead and then turned tail, coughing and sneezing, with floods of tears pouring down their cheeks. The smell, which was not disagreeable, was suggestive of pear-drops with a basis of very strong ammonia.

The hand grenade can easily be thrown twenty-five or thirty yards, and when the trenches are too far apart for their employment trench mortars capable of throwing bombs two or three hundred yards are used. The German trench mortar is a wonderful contrivance, with nothing about it to suggest improvisation. It was obviously designed and constructed by our far-sighted enemy long before war actually proved its utility. Experience, however, has shown that it has one fatal defect. It is far too heavy, and needs two men to carry it.

The French bomb-thrower which they call 'crapouillot' (whence the verb 'crapouilloter'), because it looks rather like a toad crouching to jump, is a rough-and-ready little weapon, which is as simple as the brass guns that boys delight to play with. It consists of a German shrapnel-shell case mounted on a wooden stand, with a spike in front to anchor it firmly into the earth. The case of the shrapnel shell remains intact after it has been fired, as its object is to act like a little cannon; its end opens and the shrapnel with which it is crammed is driven out by a charge of powder at the bottom of the case.

These shrapnel cases are carefully picked up by the French to be used against the enemy. They are cut down and a touch-hole is bored in them. The cost of the finished bomb-thrower does not exceed five shillings, and its weight is negligible, while any number of them can be turned out without the slightest difficulty. To use them a charge of powder is poured into the shell-case, and a bomb, well loaded with explosives, placed upon it. The charge

is fired by the touch-hole, and the bomb is thrown into the air; it turns clumsily over and over like a large sausage, but it finds its target with remarkable accuracy.

When, in the vicissitudes of battle, our enemy succeeds in capturing a front trench, his *communiqué* not infrequently dignifies these bomb-throwers with the name of guns. People at home read that ten, twenty, or thirty guns have been captured, and never for a moment suppose that these insignificant trench mortars are meant. They forget that the real artillery is not to be found in the front lines, and that it is only from well behind them that the 75's, to say nothing of the heavy guns, do their work.

It was from an observation post just 3,000 yards from the advanced German trenches that we watched the French batteries in action, or rather watched their shells bursting in the enemy's lines. To reach it, we had tramped over a waste of chalk that had once been fields. Shell-holes were the one thing that varied the monotony of its surface. The land seemed accursed, and deserted by every living being; for we were well within the range of the German guns, and in a zone which they regularly bombarded, in their efforts to silence the batteries we were about to visit.

We followed devious paths, carefully avoiding any summit or exposed slope where we might be sighted by the enemy, and at last in a little valley found a belt of fir-trees which was as refreshing as an oasis in a desert. The ground was honeycombed with underground shelters and refuges, where men might rest in peace and laugh at German shells. Here and there the long grey muzzle of a 75-millimètre gun was to be seen sticking out of a bush, its wheels, breech, and carriage being hidden from the aeroplane above by a few withered fir branches stuck jauntily upon them. At close quarters there was something in its concealment comically suggestive of the ostrich hiding its head in the sand. Despite the bushes and the branches, the guns were from the ground so obvious and so unmistakable. To all appearances a lunatic who stuck his hair full of grass and hoped to be taken for a field would have been as well disguised. Yet a branch or two well placed is all that is needed to deceive the aviator, and under their protection guns, ammunition wagons, field kitchens, and the like can be sure of escaping his eagle glance. It is only when the gun is fired that its position is betrayed—and when an aeroplane passes the guns are silent, and the men take cover, just as birds hide and are silent when the shadow of a hawk glides over the tree-tops.

That day, at any rate, there was no hostile aeroplane near, for the 75's were pounding slowly and steadily away at the rate of about one shell a minute. They were firing, as they always do, over the crest of the little hill in front of us, and we had to climb to its summit before we could hope to see their target.

Our path lay through a deep trench cut for fifty yards or so in the chalk at a point where there was no cover. Once the Germans had succeeded in dropping a big shell on its parapet, and this was the nearest approach they had made to discovering the French position. Modern artillery, particularly heavy guns fired at a great distance, has an almost uncanny capacity of missing its objective, unless the position of its target is accurately known. Hundreds of shells will fall uselessly on deserted fields only a few yards from the concealed battery or encampment, and yet it will remain in perfect security with a danger zone round it many hundred yards broad in every direction, where a man will have to walk carefully and follow a complicated zigzag course, if he is not to fall into the endless shell-holes with which the ground is pitted.

The first trench led us into the fir trees under cover of the hill; on the crest was another line of trenches containing the observation posts, and the approaches to them through the trees were marked out by bottles suspended from the lower branches, so that a man might grope his way there in the dark.

We plunged down through a hole in the side of a trench and found ourselves in the shade of a cool burrow. It seemed dark after the sunshine outside, but it was lighted by a long, narrow slit opened in the hillside. Inside one realised how safe and snug the animals which make their homes in the ground must feel. There was a great depth of earth above us, held up by solid tree-trunks, and even a 'grosse marmite' would have had small chance of unearthing us.

An officer who was directing the fire of the guns made us welcome and explained to us the position of the opposing lines. Far away on the right we could just catch a glimpse of the barren spur of 196-mètre Hill that played so important a part in the battle of Champagne. From the left there ran down a gully to which the enemy was still clinging desperately, supported by a redoubt on a hill behind, which was visible to the naked eye as a little white hummock. Down the face of the hillside opposite ran almost in a semicircle the scar of the French advanced trenches. The Germans in their gully were trying to dig a line of trenches up the

hill opposite the French line, but so far, thanks to the 75's, their efforts had been in vain.

After his general explanation the officer said that he would use shells to show us the exact locality of the German positions, just as a professor uses a pointer on the map.

'First of all,' he said, 'I will show you the German redoubt. Watch for the explosion of the shell on the hill and you will have its exact position.'

In a corner of the dug-out behind the officer a soldier was standing with a telephone in his hand, ready to transmit orders to the battery behind or to the observers who were watching the effects of the fire in the trenches on the hillside opposite.

'*Hallo! la batterie,*' called the man at the telephone at a word from the officer, '*garde à vous.*'

'With explosive shell at 3,800 mètres,' said the officer. The order was repeated down the telephone. A few seconds later there came from the man at the telephone the warning cry, '*La pièce tire.*' Almost simultaneously the ear-splitting crack of the piece and the rushing whirl of the shell, passing over our heads and fast receding, shook our shelter.

My eyes were fixed on the little white mound of the German redoubt, waiting anxiously for the bursting of the shell, when a small thing, too close to be focussed immediately, rose upwards through my field of vision. Through the echoing crash of the gun and the hurtling of the shell I heard a tiny song, 'joyous and clear and fresh.' Rising from the desolate white slope in front of me was a skylark, singing as Shelley heard it sing, and, with its little wings beating bravely, soaring serenely, as it seemed, into the very line of fire.

A distant detonation called me back. The shell had exploded while I had been intent on the skylark. Smoke was rising from behind the redoubt; the shot had been too long. The range was reduced by 25 yards and a second shot was fired, but still it was too long.

'That is extraordinary,' said the officer; 'until you came I was firing short, and now every shot is too long.'

'Which gun is firing?' he asked the man at the telephone.

'Number 6.'

'*Vérifiez les éléments.*'

After the sights had been examined, a third shot was fired, and

this time a cloud of black smoke rising from the redoubt itself showed that the true range had been found.

We had much to see in a very short time, and we had already spent more time than had been arranged in the observation post. The officer, however, was determined to show us, before we went, the exact spot where the Germans were striving so unsuccessfully to dig a line of trenches.

'With explosive shell at 3,000 mètres,' he called to the man at the telephone, 'and tell them to look lively.'

They did look lively; the last syllable of the sentence had not been shouted down the telephone before the report of the gun told that the order had been obeyed, and the smoke rising from the gully marked the exact point where the Germans were trying to dig.

The target was so far away, and the bursting shell so small, that it seemed absurd to wonder whether it had done execution,—whether really for some human beings that casual shot was the most important event in their earthly lives.

In any case, a few minutes later, when we were tramping back across the melancholy white fields, the enemy was stung to reply.

A dull report made us turn round.

And we saw, rising from behind the fir-trees, where we had been, the smoke of a bursting shell, which reminded us that the Germans, too, had their word to say.

H. WARNER ALLEN.

THE MEANING OF THE WAR TO CHILDREN.¹

A FRIEND of mine dreamed that the sky was crowded with hostile air-craft—both aeroplanes and colossal Zeppelins—so close that they could hardly move; and one of the Zeppelins came down to him, and alighted on the table. It was of the size and shape of a book-cover, and it was made of yellow Venetian glass. Still, he had no doubt that it was some sort of a Zeppelin; and he opened it, and searched it for explosives. Somewhere in the region of this dream, we must look to find the meaning of the war to children; for they live and move in a dreamland of their own, which is fanciful past all telling. And some of us are in the habit of invading their fragile kingdom, imposing on it our grown-up talk, with no more delicacy than a herd of cattle would feel for a bed of violets. What do our children make of the War? How shall we, whose they are, help them to think as they ought of it, learn what they can from it, and, above all, remember it to the day of their death?

Surely, we can help them to remember it. We can do that, even for children who are not more than four or five years old. Here is a duty which none but fools would neglect. Eighty years hence, if the children live so long, they must be able to say, *I remember the Great War*: they must preserve that memory through all the wearisome forgetfulness which besets old age. Honour, love, obedience, troops of friends, says Macbeth, are that which should accompany old age. He leaves out the best of all good company—the memory of wonderful events and wonderful people. To be able to tell of them, commends age to youth; it gives a touch of magic to the flickering years at the end. Which of us has not seen the flame leap up on that altar? I know a man who was calling, a few months ago, on a venerable old lady, and was talking to her as if he were her equal, till he found that she remembered her father telling her how he had helped to dress the wounded of the Swiss Guard after the attack on the Tuileries, and had seen the mob carrying on a pike the head of the Princesse de Lamballe. Then my friend—I borrow a vigorous phrase from Ambroise Paré—‘put his tail between his legs, and went away, and eclipsed himself.’ For he was no longer observable, nor was there anything in him worth mentioning. That one star, in the firmament

¹ This paper was read at the Annual Meeting of the Parents' National Educational Union, June 1915.

of her memory, had shone him down to the level of ordinary men, who remember their umbrellas. To be able to say of a world which died eighty years ago, *I remember it*, is a sure entrance to the love and the reverence of the young; it is a privilege of the old which cannot be annulled by poverty, nor by bodily weakness, nor by monotony of days; it shows them forth not as mere specimens of longevity, but as reliquaries, or treasuries, guarding within themselves what is more precious than themselves. There is a vile and slipshod phrase used of old folk: they are called *a link with the past*. Whose past are they a link with? Not ours: for we were not there. Nor their own: for nobody can be a link with his own past. They are not links, they are lives; and the older they are the more rare and the more delightful they are, if only they will tell us of the world as it was when they were children. Of all that I regret, this is not the least—that I might have seen and shaken hands with Newman, and sat at table with him; and I missed the chance of doing it.

We must therefore begin with the children to-day, and make sure of it, that they shall remember the War. Eighty years hence they will be sought after and had in honour, because the War still beats in them and speaks through them. But where shall we begin? How shall we so prepare them now, that they shall *enforce attention, like deep harmony*, from their children's children? If they forget the multiplication-table, or the conjugation of an irregular verb, we can make them write it twenty times; but we could hardly take this way to prevent them from forgetting the War: yet, if we did, I think that we should be justified. But there are other ways; and we must not be content to leave the children to get for themselves what we call 'a general impression' of the War.

Impressions—it is one of the stupidest words in our language—are thrust on the children, every day and all day long, from illustrated papers, bookstalls, advertisements, picture-palaces; and, in more noble and wholesome form, by the presence of men in khaki everywhere. It is for us to select those impressions which are worth having, and to define them, for the edification of the children. One wounded soldier may be writ in remembrance more than a hundred unhurt men marching away out of sight, out of mind: especially if they have no band with them. Again, it is for us to fix the impression, by associating it with some bodily act. Little boys will best remember a wounded soldier if they take off their hats to him; and little girls should be not forbidden,

but encouraged, to wave their handkerchiefs to the men marching, and, within a reasonable age-limit, to blow kisses to them; and if the kiss be blown back, on the wings of a wink, no little girl will soon forget that moment. Or the associated act might come not from the child, but from us. If I, for instance, walking with a small child, were to go down, at the sight of Lord Kitchener—as well I might—on my bended knees, and praise Heaven for him, the child would not fail to remember that Lord Kitchener had really been there. Surely it is a good plan, now and again, to pose to children, while they are still too young to find us out! They are bored by impassive parents; they love to see us moved, and to be surprised by us; it gives them pleasure to get a flash of dramatic feeling out of us, like a spark out of a heavy Leyden jar. Let us be their actors, and play to their tiny gallery, setting before them the image of things as they are. *Oh, but we ought always to be perfectly natural!* Indeed, we ought not. Perfect naturalness is for brute beasts which have no understanding. We ought to take the trouble to be performers for the children's benefit: and the perfectly natural parents are mostly they who believe that their children are made for them, not they for their children. If by standing on my head, and by no easier method, I could enable one of my grandchildren to remember the War, I hope that I should have the courage to try.

He will remember, it may be, the darkening of the streets, all last winter, round his home; and the passing of armoured motors and lorries in sight of his nursery windows; and a friendly airship which came over our square, now and again, last autumn; and, I hope, certain moments or aspects of this year of his home-life. Strange to think how valuable these now worthless memories will be to his grandchildren. Take one example. I was at Bar-le-Duc, this May, on a visit to the Urgency Cases Hospital. Bar-le-Duc is not far from some villages which were destroyed and burned in the earlier months of the War; and we found some small children, in Bar-le-Duc, playing marbles with shrapnel-bullets. I doubt whether they will remember, in their old age, this unusual game of marbles; but one of them, I hope, will remember it by this associated fact, that a queer-looking Englishman turned up, and bought some of the bullets.

Indeed, I would set lessons on the War—downright lessons with good marks and bad marks—in every nursery in the kingdom; and if a child of average ability, at seven years of age, could not

answer any of my questions, he should stand in the corner till he could. It is pitiful that a child should know more about William the Conqueror than about the King of the Belgians. To older children, from twelve to fifteen years of age, I would give, each term, an examination-paper. Here are some questions for that purpose :—

1. What has been the effect of the War on you and on your home ?

2. Imagine that you have £10 to spend on the relief of suffering caused by the War. How will you proceed ?

3. It has been suggested that children should say, as a grace, 'Thank God and the British Navy for my good dinner.' What significance, if any, do you find in this form of words ?

4. Explain the following lines from Shakespeare (*King John*, Act v. sc. vii.), with special reference to the last line, as bearing on the present War :

This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.

5. Describe and comment on any recent cartoon in *Punch*.

6. Among our national pleasures are football-matches and horse-racing. What arguments have been urged for the continuance of these pleasures during the War ?

7. Write out any one true story, which you know by heart, of the heroic spirit of our soldiers and sailors.

But what I long for is time and brains to write not a set of questions, but a little book, for children, on the War. I would *play the sedulous ape* to Ruskin, to Kingsley, to Stephen Graham. I could steal the time from other work, and the brains from other men ; and for a frontispiece I would have that picture from the Christmas number of the *Graphic* which has turned railway book-stalls into wayside shrines : the one and only picture of the War, up to now, which says what most needs to be said on canvas. For the little book must begin at the right end—at the top, not at the bottom. Grown-up books may begin where they like ; children's books must begin at the very beginning, which is neither before nor after the event, but above it.

It would be a dear little book. In style, insight, and width of outlook, it would surpass Mrs. Markham's 'History of England.' Her real name—I learn it from 'Nelson's Encyclopædia'—was

Elizabeth Penrose ; and I am not surprised that she wrote under an assumed name. She was my first historian ; and I remember one of the questions which come at the end of each chapter : *Mamma, was Julius Cæsar a good man ?* It fell to my turn, more than half a century ago, to read aloud this hideous question ; and, with singular felicity, I cried. It may have been a brother ; but I think it was myself. To be exposed, all of a sudden, to the brutality of this question—to have to read such nonsense out loud—here was enough to enrage any child with a sense of humiliation. In the Elysian Fields, I hope that I may meet Elizabeth Penrose : I will try to explain to her why I cried. She will be puzzled ; she will knit her brows and stare at me, and say that I must have been a most unaccountable and wayward child, who ought to have been whipped. I will assent, with more than mere politeness, to that proposition ; then we will sit, she and I, in a quiet place in those quiet Fields, and I will tell her all about my grandchildren ; and, if I have written the ‘Children’s History of the Great War,’ I will give her a copy.

The plan of this book leads me on ; but I see no more than glimpses of it between driving clouds of difficulties. I cannot guess what is in the minds of the children touching the War. My mind, surely, must wait on theirs. I cannot interview them, nor report them : no child worth reporting is willing to be interviewed. They would put me off with idle answers ; or they would take me at the foot of the letter, and thus disarm me. That is what happened last autumn. I took a small child to see Buckingham Palace, and I sought, at the expense of truth, to improve the occasion. I told him that every English gentleman, when he looks at Buckingham Palace, takes off his hat, and says ‘God save the King.’ And he said it, with charming reverence ; then he broke my intention toward him, as it were a soap-bubble. ‘Does God save kings ?’ he asked. And I cannot convey in writing the emphasis which he laid on the *does*, nor the sense which I had that *kings* must not be spelt with a large *k*. I staggered under this thrust : I said, feebly, that He saved good ones. What was in the child’s mind ? Had he a vision—like the votive pictures to saints—a vision of men, crowned and sceptred, tumbling under motor-cars, and Somebody from the sky pulling them out of harm’s way ? Or was it a vision of kings, I know not how, saved-up, collected, like pennies in a money-box ? For there are no bounds to a child’s fancies ; and I have not yet been able to decide what I ought to

have said. Still, it cannot hurt a child to say God save the King. Neither can it hurt a child, I think, to say God punish England. We read of German school-children learning to say that: and I am glad to think that it will harm neither them nor England. How can it hurt a small child to repeat this over-advertised curse? After all, it is a form of prayer; and almost any form of prayer, among children, is better than none. If I had to choose between teaching a child to pray God to punish his country's enemies in this War, and teaching a child to think of this War without any reference to God, I would choose the former. Patriotism, at its worst, is better for children than atheism at its best. Besides, if these flaxen-haired boys and girls do pray God to punish England, they doubtless, with equal fervour, pray Him to help Germany; and the Name, coming twice on their lips, scores twice in their heads. It is nonsense to say that the children are too young to mention the War to their Maker. If they are old enough to call His attention to Mother and Daddy and Nan and Pussy, they are old enough to pray on wider lines.

It is here, I think, that we elders may be of some use to them; but, if we are to be that, we must abandon our accustomed way of talking of the War, when we talk to them. Our mistake is that we try to cut down our talk to fit them. We can, indeed, cut down our clothes to fit them, with more or less happy results, but we cannot cut down our words, nor our thoughts: we should merely cut them to nothing, to shreds and patches—no proper wear for children. We grown-up folk hesitate, for many reasons, to use the Divine Name in our talk of the War; and it is not for me to weigh the loss and gain which come of this reticence. Only, I think that it impairs the worth of any talk between us and the children, touching the War. It fences off the very ground where they and we ought to meet: it puts up a notice-board, *No trespassing*, where the children ought to be able to look up and read a sign-post. So much of our talk is meaningless to them, that we must not heighten difficulties. What can they make of our newspapers, our maps, our habit of saying not French people and German people, but France and Germany? Let us clear, and keep clear, that plot of ground which is common to us and the children, and every path whereby they may come there and find us waiting for them.

To begin with, let us clear out of their way all that might offend them, in the proper sense of that word; all the rubbish, and worse than rubbish, of comic postcards, nicknames, brutal caricatures, and

so forth. It makes me sick, now, to think how I enjoyed such things in the War of 1870. Next, let us be careful to attribute the War not to the German Emperor, but to the German people, or to the people who command the German Army ; we shall blunder here, but we shall blunder more gravely if we represent the Emperor as making war all by himself. Next, I am inclined to advise parents not to encourage small children to play at the War. They may with advantage play at soldiers ; but I dislike to see an English child pretending that he is a German ; and you can play at soldiers quite well without that. To play at soldiers is to play at life ; to play at war is to play at pain and death. I do not know that it can do them much harm to play at pain and death, but I do not see that it can do them any good ; and, for this year, it seems ill-suited to them. Let them dress up and march, to their hearts' content, but let them draw the line there. To play at soldiers will help these babes to remember the War. But the older children, the boys and girls from eight to fifteen—who are too old to play at soldiers—we must make up our minds what to say to these young people.

The name of the War, in the hearts of us who are grown up, is attended and encircled by other great names. Among these are Honour, Duty, Courage, Obedience, Sacrifice, God. Through this great circle of names, one and all of them names of authority and of immemorial age, we must approach the central fact of the War itself. If we were by ourselves, we could find a hundred ways of approach ; but we are not by ourselves. We have got the children with us—these big, impatient, inquisitive children hanging on to us, wanting to know what we think of the War. They drag us toward that central fact, and we must approach it hand-in-hand with them. And I believe that the best way of approach, when we have them with us, is through the Divine Name ; because it is already familiar to them, and it cannot be annulled by their most fantastical notions touching their Maker. As it is past their understanding, so it is past ours ; therefore, it brings them and us level. Besides, it is not open to certain objections which attach to the other names. Children are able to comprehend the meaning of personal honour, personal duty ; but we can hardly make them see the meaning of national honour, national duty : they care nothing for politics, and the Divine Name is above politics. The German children, with their *God punish England*, have at any rate laid hold of a clear thought : and we might well borrow it, and explain to our children how and why God is punishing, and will further punish, Germany :

War is His beadle, War is His vengeance. But we must make it clear to the children that the punishment of Germany does not mean that our own country is going unpunished or scot-free.

These older children, these clever boys and girls who think for themselves, need to be told not what they can understand, but what they cannot understand, nor we either. I want them to get above the belief that the issues of war can be decided by miraculous interference, the belief in a tribal or national deity: I want them not to see anything absurd in the same prayers and the same *Te Deum* coming alike from our enemies and from us; and I want them, through all this clearance, to attain perfect confidence that God is on the side of the Allies. And the only question is, Can they? I say that they can. It may help them if we tell them what Abraham Lincoln said of the American War—that he could not know for certain that God was on his side, but he hoped that he was on God's side. That is the sort of text which is able to stick in their heads. I would start from it, and I would begin right away with the violation of Belgium. I would compel them to see that God, being on the side of Decency and of Honour, is on the side of Belgium. Appearances are against it: so they were at the time of that other Crucifixion. Belgium, I would say to the children, is *crucifixa etiam pro nobis*. She saved others, herself she could not save. I would hang the story of Belgium straight on to the story of the Passion. How far this kind of talk would carry me and the children, I neither know nor care. What does concern us is that we should begin here, at the very beginning, with phrases which are familiar to children, yet give no countenance to any gross or superstitious fancies of religion.

Besides, if we begin here, with this great concept of the love in a man who lays down his life for his friends, we shall help the children to admire the love wherever they find it, and to recognise it, whatever nationality be put over the man's grave. I do not say that we can help them to understand the meaning, or the purpose, of pain and of death, or of the horrors of the War—we should be the blind leading the blind—but I do say that a child who starts with the Divine Name, and with the Passion, will find himself on the right lines if the War brings death, or pain, or poverty, into the circle of his own home. It will not help him, then, to call the German Emperor a wicked man, or to hate Germany; he will feel the need of something more final than that.

Of course, here, I am out of my depth. We must always be

careful to get well out of our depth before we venture to say anything about the War. But I think that I am right in my estimate of the meaning of the War to children. If they are too small to wonder at the War, at least we can help them to remember it; we shall thus enhance the value of their later age. If the children are old enough to wonder at the War, we can help them to go on wondering. But we shall not help them by talking politics to them, nor by talking horrors to them, nor by teaching them to laugh at idiotic caricatures of the German Emperor. If we are to help them, we must approach the War, hand in hand with them, through that Name which is greater even than the War, yet is not strange to them. And, if we get the children on these lines now, they will not have to change anywhere: they will go direct to the end of their journey. We have seen them off: they are bound to arrive all right. I am thinking of them years hence. No, not eugenics. It is idle to try to guess what will be the level of the physical health of a generation which is not yet born. I am thinking of our own children. Will the War make what we call a permanent impression on them? Will it have any meaning for them in the later years of their life?

Surely it will; but not, I think, by haunting them with images of wreckage and of terror. These fade: but the changes which are being wrought in our life by the War are less perishable. We have got rid, since August, of many weaved-up follies, entanglements, patches of decadence, and so forth. We are a better lot of men and women than we were a year ago. This corner of the world, for many years, will be a grand place to live in, a good spiritual nursery for the children to play in, a wholesome school for them, where they may learn the graver virtues not as extras, but as regular lessons. If I could have my time all over again, I should like to be born now, before the War is over, and to grow up in that new order which is coming upon our national life.

STEPHEN PAGET.

THE PLANT EVERLASTIN'.

Mr. and Mrs. Ned Wingate did not present a picture of conjugal happiness as they gazed out of the car windows into the fast gathering darkness. This trip was in sad contrast to the one they had made at Easter-tide a year ago, when, showered with rice and congratulations, they had gone over this same road to begin life together in their new Southern home.

It was the inevitable first-year quarrel, the clash between two sensitive untrammelled natures, neither of which was willing to forgive or forget. She had been ill and unreasonable; he had been well and selfish. The cause of the trouble was forgotten in the rush of accumulating grievances. The end came as a shock to both. On the impulse of an angry moment she had wished to return to her father. Wingate's love had struggled with his pride, and the latter conquered. Certainly, if she wished it, she should go; he would take her back to New York and return on the first train.

He leaned back in his corner with apparent indifference, but his anxious eyes returned again and again to the delicate face opposite. She was still very weak, and the fatigue of the journey was telling on her.

It was quite dark when they reached Cincinnati, and as Wingate stepped out on the platform for a breath of fresh air he was thankful that the men idling about the bright doorways could not see his face. He felt that every passer-by must read the misery in his eyes. Surely this horrible dream would end: he would wake to find it all a mistake! Yes, he had been selfish; he saw it all now, but his love for her had never wavered. If he could only try it over again and prove that he was not what she thought him! But even in her wrath she had no right to say the things she had said; they rang in his ears with aching persistency. After all, she had ceased to love him. That was the only solution to the tangle, and if that were so he had no desire to hold her against her will.

A passing truck grazed his shoulder, and at the same moment the conductor called 'All aboard!' As Wingate entered the car he found the aisle blocked with numerous bags, bundles, and boxes. In the midst of them stood a stout old woman saying

good-bye to a rough-looking young fellow in overalls. He had both arms around her, and kissed her first on one cheek, then on the other.

'Good-bye ; I've told the conductor to look after you, mother. Every thing'll be all right,' and with a final kiss he scrambled through the narrow passage way, and swung himself off the moving train.

The old woman wiped the tears from her faded blue eyes, and smiled confidently at Wingate, who was waiting to pass.

'That was a reg'lar mother hug !' she said, 'even if it did knock my bonnet clean off.'

The porter by this time had gathered up her various possessions, and deposited them in the section just in front of the Wingates.

'Boy, is your name Porter ?' she demanded, holding her head back and eyeing him through her glasses.

'Yas'm, dat's what dey calls me,' said the darcy with a broad grin.

'Well,' continued the old woman, 'you set down there a minute till I get a quarter out of my handkerchief. Jim said I was to give it to you.'

She lifted her dress-skirt and dived into the recesses of a capacious pocket in her petticoat. From this she took a clean cotton handkerchief, in the corner of which was tied some small change.

When this business was attended to, she began to rearrange her boxes, casting furtive glances now and again at the young couple behind her. Presently she leaned over and touched Ethel Wingate on the arm.

'Say, honey,' she asked in an anxious whisper, 'do you think it would be unproper for me to take off my collar and cuffs ? Jim bought 'em fer me in Cincinnati. I wouldn't 'a' took 'em off before he left fer nothin'. But I'm awful het up, an' if you think it wouldn't look too ornery—'

'Pardon me,' interrupted Wingate, not unkindly, 'but my wife is ill ; I'm afraid it will make her nervous to talk.'

The old woman squared herself around and was at once filled with sympathetic concern.

'Well, I might 'a' knowed it !' she exclaimed compassionately ; 'the pore chile looks terribly peaked. Got a misery in yer head, honey ?'

Ethel nodded and smiled faintly, the first time for many days.

'I got a hop pillow in my bag ; it's mighty good to make you

sleep,' suggested the new passenger. The cheery face under the smooth white hair was so sweet and loving, and the offer made with such evident sympathy, that Ethel had not the heart to refuse.

As her head rested on the red cotton pillow and the soothing odour of the hops stole over her, she forgot for the time her trouble and drifted into a light sleep.

Ned, in the seat across the way, saw the little frown on the white forehead disappear, saw the lips part and lose their hard, straight line. What a child she was! How frail and dependent! He longed to put his arms about her and take her home.

'Have a peach?' he heard someone say behind him, and turning he saw his old friend passing around a bag of fruit. Every passenger was smiling, and she was smiling too.

'These here are "Stump o' the World" peaches, grewed right on our place. They was set out the year my little Jimmy put on long pants; ain't they done well?' she asked proudly.

Just here the car gave a lurch, and she sat down unexpectedly in Wingate's lap.

'My! but I'll be shuck up by the time I git there!' she said, sliding into the seat and holding on firmly with both hands.

'Where are you going?' asked Wingate, feeling that some remark was necessary.

'I'm goin' to see William,' she said, glad to have a listener. 'He's my only brother, lives up to New York town. I ain't seen him fer goin' on forty year. Jimmy, my son, you seen him when he come in with me? Well, he's been savin' up fer lands knows how long, fer me to take this trip. He sez, "Mother," sez he, "you ain't a goin' till I kin send you in a parlor car." I never cared what kind of car I went on, jes so I went. But that boy always wants his ole mother to have the best that's goin'. It's real fine,' she continued, glancing admiringly around; 'I never was on a night car before. All them little lookin'-glasses and sofies is mighty nice.'

Wingate found any company better than his own, so he asked, 'Is your brother expecting you?'

'Good lands, yes! He's as sot on seein' me as I am on seein' him. I 'spect Hannah an' the girls is makin' pies for Aunt Betsy right this minute. Jimmy writ 'em I was comin'. Is that the conductor?' she broke off.

She rose carefully, and, steadying herself by the backs of the seats, went forward and held out a hand of welcome.

'I guess Jimmy tole you 'bout me,' she said, pleasantly.

The conductor was a gentleman, so he shook hands and assured her that he would be glad to attend to her wants.

'Well, Jimmy said you would,' she fairly beamed; 'do yer folks travel backards and furards with you?'

'No,' said the conductor kindly. 'They live just this side of Cincinnati; if it had been light you might have seen the house. It's a little house with a big flower garden.'

Aunt Betsy was deeply interested. 'I might 'a' knowed yer wife loved flowers. You sorter talk like it. Has she got a moon-vine?'

The conductor thought not.

Aunt Betsy hastened to her seat and again explored her two-handed basket. In a few moments she came up flushed but triumphant.

'You jes' take them to Mrs. Conductor,' she said, smiling at her little joke. 'I was takin' 'em to William's wife, but I kin git Jimmy to send me some more.'

By this time every man and woman in the car had got interested in Aunt Betsy. Each new attention filled her with enthusiasm, and everybody was taken into her confidence, from the train boy up.

When most of the passengers had gone into the dining-car for supper, she spread herself a bountiful repast from the black wicker basket.

'I wisht you all would take some,' she said, making a last appeal to the Wingates.

Ned leaned his head against the window, and gazed at the dark objects flying past. The monotonous hum of the wheels seemed an endless repetition of his thoughtless acts and speeches during the past twelve months. He saw things for the first time from Ethel's standpoint, and remorse took possession of him. But what good could come of it now? He had killed her love for him, had forfeited his right to cherish and protect her.

The train slowed up at a little station; a country band was playing one of the popular airs of the day. The melody brought back a flood of memories to Wingate. He and Ethel were once more in a dim conservatory, shut off from the world by the roses and orchids and cool green plants. He was telling her the old sweet story, and between the words and the heart-beats came the haunting strains of this very waltz. He wondered if she remembered. He looked up and their eyes met.

'You orter hear my Jimmy play that on his jews'-harp!' exclaimed Aunt Betsy.

Wingate got up abruptly and went into the smoker. The journey seemed interminable, yet he begrudged every turn of the wheels that brought the separation nearer. He took out his watch and held it absently in his hand. Ethel's face smiled up at him from the case. It was a slender oval face with large appealing eyes, and a mouth that still retained its childish curves. He set his teeth hard together, and drew in a deep breath.

'What time is it?' asked the man in the seat nearest.

Ned looked at him blankly. 'I do not know,' he said and passed on.

The next morning, while the Wingates' section was being made up, Ned took the seat across the aisle, but Ethel sat with Aunt Betsy.

'Yes,' the latter was saying; 'I got along better'n I 'spected to. I slept considerable. But do you know'—she leaned forward and spoke in a loud whisper—'that young man what slept upstairs in my bed, he put his shoes right under the head of my bed. I think it was rale unmannerly, don't you?'

Ned could not hear Ethel's answer, but he held up his newspaper to hide his smile.

'I'm jes' fixin' up a little snack fer the engine-man,' the good soul went on; 'he must 'a' set up all night long. What time do we git into New York town?' she asked, suddenly turning to Ned.

'Two o'clock, I believe,' he answered with a sickening realisation of how near the time was approaching.

'Lawsy me!' Aunt Betsy rattled on. 'It seems 'sif I jes' couldn' wait to see William. Forty years is a long time.'

'Has it been that long since you saw him?' asked Ethel, listlessly.

'Yes, dear, forty, goin' on to forty-one. I been sittin' here ever since I got up, thinkin' 'bout the good times we uster have together. I begun clean back to the time when we was children, when ma used to put holes in our sun-bonnets and tie our curls through on the outside to keep us from runnin' 'round bare-headed.' She smiled at the recollection, but sighed soon after and wiped the mist from her spectacles. 'William's an old man now, I reckon, but I love him jes' like I uster when he was little. 'Pears like bein' away from folks sometimes brings out yer love fer 'em stronger'n ever. When God plants a little seed of love down deep in yer heart,

it looks like it's jes' bound ter grow. You kin keep it all kivered up in the dark and think it's dead long ago, but sure as you let the light git to it, it blossoms right out.'

Ned saw Ethel lay her white hand on the old wrinkled one, but he could not hear what she said.

'No, indeed,' answered Aunt Betsy stoutly, 'it ain't a goin' to die if it's the true kind. I guess it's what God calls His everlastin' plant.'

For the next hour Ned pondered over these homely words. Was love immortal? That he and Ethel had loved each other was certain; but he thought that love was dead; suppose it was really only hidden away in the dark, and would blossom out some day when it would be too late? He looked out on the fresh spring world, newly awakened from the long winter's sleep, and a wistful light came into his eyes.

A boy came through the car with a basket full of Easter lilies. Ethel bought a handful of the snowy flowers and put them in Aunt Betsy's lap. Wingate remembered that they had formed her bridal bouquet.

Three-quarters of an hour before they were due in New York, Aunt Betsy packed her bags and boxes, struggled into her collar and cuffs, and, for the first time since leaving home, began to show some signs of nervousness.

'Sposin' William didn't meet me?' she said, turning anxiously to Ned. He reassured her for the time, but presently she turned to Ethel.

'You guess he'll know me, don't you? I reckon it's a awful big depo'. Jimmy would hate to have me git lost.' Her voice trembled with excitement, and she pulled nervously at the fingers of her cashmere gloves.

'I'll stay with you until he comes,' began Ethel, impulsively; then she checked herself, and glanced at her husband. He pretended to be absorbed in the morning paper, but in reality he was intensely conscious of her every word and motion.

They were in the city now, and the porter came through for final dustings and final tips; canes, umbrellas, grips, and coats were gathered up, and the train slowly pulled into the Forty-second Street Station. Aunt Betsy, in a quiver of excitement, oscillated between her numerous bundles and the door. The porter was occupied elsewhere, so to ease her mind Ned took the largest basket, and Ethel followed with a bandbox tied up with blue yarn.

On the platform all was bustle and confusion, and Aunt Betsy, completely bewildered, looked this way and that for a familiar face. Suddenly a white-haired old man hobbled up.

'Is this here Betsy Martin?' he asked, uncertainly.

Down went the great cotton umbrella and the carpet-sack, and two loving old souls met in a long embrace. Mr. and Mrs. Ned Wingate were slipping away in the crowd when Aunt Betsy spied them.

'Oh, good-bye!' she called out. 'Jimmy'll be mightily obleeged to yer fer lookin' after me so good. Good-bye; be good to yerselves.'

An incoming train poured its stream of people into the station, and a rush was made for the gates. Ned put his arm about his frail little wife to protect her from the crowd.

'Ned, dear,' she said so low he could hardly hear, 'did you know it was Easter Tuesday?'

'Yes, Ethel,' he said, tightening his arm about her. 'It's our anniversary day.'

Five minutes later they stood at the ticket office.

'What time does the South-western Limited leave?' asked Wingate briskly.

'Half an hour, sir,' answered the agent, as he turned to stamp two tickets.

ALICE HEGAN RICE.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A PRISONER OF WAR.

BY JEFFERY E. JEFFERY.

October 15, 1914. Hospital, Bavai, France.—Woke up to find the ward seething with excitement. One of the English wounded had escaped in the night, leaving his greatcoat neatly placed in his bed in such a manner as to suggest a recumbent figure. How he succeeded in evading the attentions of a night-nurse, an R.A.M.C. orderly, a German sentry at the main gate and two others in the courtyard outside the ward, is a complete mystery. The situation for the French hospital authorities is serious. So far, although the Germans are in occupation of the town, have garrisoned it with a company of 'Landwehr' and have appointed a 'Governor' with a particularly offensive polyglot secretary, they have left the running of the hospital in the hands of the French staff. Bavai has been looted but not sacked, no inhabitants have been shot and no fine inflicted. But what will happen now?

Technically, of course, responsibility for the custody of the patients rests with the Germans, since they have posted sentries at the hospital and in the town. But conventions and technicalities do not count for much in these days. The doctor, five or six nurses, and the lady by whose charity the hospital is maintained hold a conference, animated by many dramatic gestures and an astonishing flow of eloquence. They are torn between fear of the consequences which may recoil upon the hospital and admiration for the daring of the man who stole forth into the rain, unarmed and without a coat, to face the dangers of an unknown country infested with the enemy—alone.

'Quelle bêtise!' cried one. 'Oui, mais quel courage!' answered another. 'Si les Allemands l'attrapent, il sera fusillé, sans doute.'

It is decided to inform the Governor, and a deputation is formed for the purpose. In less than a quarter of an hour a squad of stolid Teutons arrive and search the hospital from attic to cellar. They even enter the apartments of the nuns, to the horror of our kind old priest. Of course they find nothing. It is by now eight o'clock. At nine the edict is given. In two hours every patient in the hospital who is able to crawl is to be ready to leave. I ask my friend the doctor if he can in any way pretend that I am worse than I am. 'Pas possible,' he replies, shaking his head sadly.

So it is over—this long period of waiting and hoping; waiting for an advance which never came, hoping where no hope was. Seven weeks have passed since I was brought in here, left behind wounded when the tide of war ebbed back towards Paris, and in that time I have gathered many memories which will never fade. I have seen strong men racked with pain day after day, night after night, until sometimes at last exhausted Nature gave up the struggle and the nurses would come and whisper to me, crossing themselves, ‘Il est mort, le pauvre. Ah ! comme il a souffert.’ I have realised to the full the compassion of Woman for suffering humanity, irrespective of creed or nationality; and I have known the blessing of morphia. Once, very early in the morning, just as the dawn was beginning to creep in and light with a ghostly dimness the rows of white beds and their restless, groaning occupants, I heard the tinkle of the bell announcing the approach of the priest bearing the Host; and drowsily (for I was under morphia) I watched Extreme Unction being administered to a dying German officer. Death, the overlord, is a great leveller of human passions. The old *curé*, whose face was that of a medieval saint and in whose kindly eyes there shone a pity akin to the divine, muttered the sacred words with a sincerity of conviction that one could not doubt. A few hours before I had heard his sonorous voice rolling out the Archbishop of Cambrai’s prayer for victory: ‘Seigneur, qui êtes le Dieu des armées et le maître de la vie et de la mort, Vous qui avez toujours aimé la France . . .’

11 A.M.—We are ready to start. The dining-hall (in times of peace this hospital is a school) is crowded as we are given our last meal. The nuns, the doctor and his wife, the nurses, the village shoemaker who was our barber and who always used to have a reassuring rumour of some sort to retail—all are there to wish us a last sad ‘Au revoir.’ They ply us with food and drink, but we are too miserable to take much. Then the word is given—we file out slowly through the courtyard into the sunlit street where two transport wagons are drawn up opposite the gate. There are nineteen French soldiers, two English privates, and myself. Our names are called by a German officer. Those who cannot walk are helped (by their comrades) into the wagons. We three English are carefully searched, but our money is not taken. It is decreed that the Englishmen must be separated by at least two Frenchmen. Does our escort (twenty armed men under a sergeant) fear a combined revolt, I wonder, or is this done merely to annoy us? I

suspect the latter. A crowd of inhabitants forms round us, pressing close to say good-bye. Suddenly the German officer notices this and in one second is transformed into a raging beast. He wheels round upon the crowd, waves his stick and pours forth a torrent of abuse. The people cower back against the wall and his anger subsides. It is the first display of German temper that I have seen. To hear women reviled, even in a strange tongue—and for nothing—is horrible.

We start. At the corner I look back regretfully at the hospital where I have received such kindness as I can never forget. From a top window a handkerchief is waving. It is the nurse who, when I was really at my worst, never left my bedside for more than five minutes during two long nights and a day. To her, I think, I owe my life. For a moment the face of the cobbler distinguishes itself from the others in the crowd. He makes himself heard above the rattle of the wagons on the *pavée* street. 'Vous reviendrez après la guerre, mon lieutenant,' he shouts.

'Oui, je vous assure—à bientôt,' I call back as we turn out into the open country and face the straight poplar-lined road that leads to Maubeuge. Half-way we stop at an *estaminet* for beer. The prisoners, even the English, are allowed to purchase some. The German sergeant chucks under the chin the attractive-looking French girl who serves him. She smiles, but as he turns his back I note the sudden expression of fierce hate which leaps into her eyes.

It is after 3 P.M. when we reach the outskirts of Maubeuge and cross the drawbridge over the old moat, made, I believe, by Vauban. Inside the town there are many signs of the devastation of war—buildings gutted, whole streets of small houses laid flat in ruins. The pavements are crowded and people throw chocolates and cigarettes to us. German officers, wrapped in their long grey cloaks, swagger about, brushing everyone aside in haughty insolence. From the windows of two or three hospitals French soldiers peer out and wave to us in obvious sympathy. Approaching the railway station we go past the identical spot where, eight weeks ago to the day, the battery detrained. The logs on which we sat to eat our belated breakfast after the long night journey up from Boulogne are still there. Oh! the humiliation of it all; a week in the country, one hour's fighting, seven weeks in hospital, and now—prison.

In the open space outside the station we are drawn up by the pavement. The French are allowed to sit down on the curb; not so we three unfortunate English. On our attempting to do so the

sergeant in charge shouts at us and one of the escort threatens us with a bayonet. Some inhabitants who approach us with offers of food and drink are driven off harshly. A crowd of German soldiers, some half-drunk, collects round us. They all know the English word 'swine.' Pointing us out to each other they use it without stint. One man has a more extended vocabulary of abuse. Having exhausted it he proceeds to recount for our benefit the damnable story that English soldiers use the marlinspike on their clasp-knives to gouge out the eyes of German wounded. We have already heard this allegation made before. The English-speaking secretary of the Governor at Bavai was very fond of it. But he, who was educated and who had lived in London for years, knew, I'm sure, that it was a malicious lie invented by the authorities for the express purpose of exciting the Germans against us. But these men undoubtedly believe it. They produce knives of their own from their boots and threaten us with them. The expression on their faces is that of angry, untamed beasts. And yet, I dare say, at home these very men who now would like to tear us to pieces are really simple, harmless working folk. Such is war.

It is an awkward moment. If either of my compatriots loses his temper (which is not improbable, for the British soldier will not stand insult indefinitely) he will let fly with his tongue or even his fist, in which case we shall all three be put against the nearest wall and shot. So I keep muttering, 'For God's sake take no notice; try to look as though you don't hear or understand'—knowing that besides being the safest attitude this will also be the most galling for our revilers. Contemptuous indifference is sometimes a dignified defensive weapon. Finding that we are not to be drawn, the crowd gradually disperses, and for an hour and a half we are kept standing in the gutter. Then another long procession of dejected prisoners winds its way into the yard and we are taken with them into the station. The wait inside is enlivened for me by a conversation with a German N.C.O. who speaks English perfectly. He has lived, he tells me, eighteen years in South Africa and fought for us against the Matabele. Until this war he liked the English, he frankly confesses. Now nothing is too bad for us. *We* started it, *we're* the bullies of Europe, it's *we* who must be crushed. Germany can't be beaten. Napoleon the First couldn't do it. 'We Germans,' he says, 'fight without pay for love of our country, but you are mercenaries; you enlist for money.' From motives of personal safety I refrain from making the obvious retort: 'On the contrary,

we are volunteers—you go into the army because you're dam' well made to.'

A diversion is caused by a wounded French soldier who faints, has to be given brandy and is discovered to be far too bad to travel. Why not have left the poor devil in his hospital? He's surely harmless enough from a military point of view.

6 P.M.—We file across the line on to the other platform. On the way one of the English privates is kicked, hard, from behind by a passing German soldier. His whispered comments to me are unprintable. Our train appears to consist entirely of cattle trucks. Just as I am about to enter one of these in company with some French soldiers, a German captain touches me on the shoulder. 'You are an officer, aren't you?' he says in French, and motions me aside. Pointing at me, the sergeant who had brought us from Bavai says something to the officer, the purport of which, I gather, is that his orders were to put me in with the men. Fortunately, however, this captain has gentlemanly instincts; he ignores the sergeant, leads me down to the other end of the platform and deposits me in a second-class carriage with three French officers. We begin to exchange experiences. Two are doctors, the other a captain of Colonial Infantry wounded during the siege of Maubeuge. They tell me that there is another English officer on the train. I now begin to realise that I am hungry and half dead with fatigue. To march eight miles and then to stand upright for nearly three hours, after having walked no more than the length of the hospital ward for weeks, is no joke. The above-mentioned English officer comes in from the next carriage and introduces himself as Major B., cavalry, wounded at the very beginning and put into Maubeuge to recover; of course he was taken prisoner when that place fell. He and the French officers give me food and a blanket, for both of which I am more than grateful. An elderly Landsturm private armed with a loaded rifle and a saw-bayonet occupies one corner of our carriage, so that there is not much room to lie down. We start about 7.30, but I am so over-tired and so cold that I get very little sleep.

October 16.—Woke to find that we had only gone about 20 miles and had not yet reached Charleroi. A long, wearisome day, during which we exhausted our supplies of food. Passed through Namur and Liège but were unable to see signs of the bombardment of either place. In the evening reached Aix, where we were given lukewarm cocoa and sandwiches made of black bread and sausage—particularly nasty. But by this time we were so hungry that

anything was welcome. The guard in our carriage, finding that we were not really likely to strangle him if he took his eyes off us for a moment, relaxed considerably, accepted cigarettes, gave us some of his bread, confessed to one of the Frenchmen who could speak a little German that he hated the war and heartily wished that he was home again ; finally he put his rifle on the rack and slept as well as any of us.

October 17.—All yesterday and all this morning we passed train after train of reinforcements going to the front ; some of the carriages were decorated with evergreens, and nearly all of them were labelled 'Paris' in chalk. Many of the men looked very young—hardly more than boys. Several trains, crammed with wounded, overtook us. The sight of English uniform was always enough to attract a crowd at any station where we stopped. I wonder if the inhabitants of the Maori village at Earl's Court experienced the same sensations as I did—sitting there to be stared at, pointed at and not infrequently insulted.

At about 11.30 we were taken out of the train and locked into a waiting-room with about half-a-dozen Belgian officers, all wounded, who had arrived from some other direction. An extremely fussy N.C.O. had charge of us and persisted in counting us every ten minutes. Got into another train about 1 P.M. and eventually arrived at our destination, Crefeld, at 1.30. We were taken out of the station almost immediately, marched through a large and rather hostile crowd and put into a tram. In this we went up to the barracks—about two miles. Male inhabitants shook their fists at us, females put out their tongues : so chivalrous !

In spite of the relief of at last being at the end of our journey, there was something terribly depressing in the sound of the heavy gate shutting to behind us. We were first taken up to an office and made to fill in our names, ranks, regiments, and monthly rates of pay on a special form ; then put inside the palisade and left to find our way about. There are about sixty French officers here, a dozen or so Belgians (including the commander of Antwerp and his artillery general), and seven English, one of whom is a retired captain who happened to be in Belgium at the outbreak of war and who was arrested as a spy on no evidence whatever. Spent the remainder of the day settling down and writing home. It is a comfort, at any rate, to think that I can at last let people know what has become of me. Comparing notes with the other English here, we discover that they were all wounded early in the War,

on the Aisne. We learn for the first time details of the stationary French warfare into which the campaign is developing and hear all about the German preponderance in heavy artillery. We feed here in the big dining-hall attached to the canteen (in which by the way a great variety of things can be bought, including beer, wine, and tobacco). We live and sleep in the barrack rooms and we have the whole space of the barrack square—200 yards long by about 80 wide—to play about in! Subalterns are paid 60 marks a month, higher ranks 100. Every one is charged 2 marks a day for messing. The unfortunate subaltern, therefore, finds his accounts flat at the end of the month—unless the month has thirty-one days, in which case he owes the Imperial Government 2 marks! Am glad I've got about a fiver with me, which ought to last until I can get more from home. Slept like a log on a bed as hard as iron.

October 18.—Five more English officers arrived this morning, including Major V—. They were all more dead than alive, having spent three days and three nights in a cattle truck, the floor of which was covered with six inches of wet dung; the ammonia fumes had got into their eyes and they could hardly see; they had had practically no food and all through the journey they had been submitted to every conceivable insult. The cattle truck contained fifty-two persons—officers, privates, and civilians. Such treatment is beyond comment. From Major V— I heard for the first time of the tragic fate of the battery on September 1. He could give no details beyond that it was surprised in bivouac at dawn by eight 'dug-in' German guns at 700 yards' range, that it was simply cut to pieces, but that the guns were served to the last, that the hostile batteries were silenced, and, in the end, captured. All the officers were killed or wounded. It's too awful to be ignorant of further particulars. Went to bed more depressed than I have been all these weeks. I daren't think that 'Brad'¹ has been killed.

October 19.—This morning we were made to parade at 10.30 to be counted; this is to be a daily amusement. The food here might be worse and at present there is plenty of it. Took some exercise round the square—a deadly business. In the afternoon shaved off a month's beard with a cheap German safety razor, which was a painful operation! Ordered some underclothing from the town.

October 20.—Employed a pouring wet day writing many letters, including one to Bavai, though it is questionable if it ever gets there.

¹ The late Captain E. K. Bradbury, V.C., R.H.A.

October 22.—Two more English officers arrived, one wounded. Both seemed to think that things were going well but neither knew much. This morning the new commandant took over. He looks like an opulent and good-natured butcher disguised as a Hungarian bandsman. Actually, I am informed, he is a retired major of Hussars. In the course of a chatty little discourse at the roll-call parade he informed us that in future we are to be counted at 7.45 A.M. and 10 P.M.; further that alcoholic liquors will no longer be obtainable. Thus we are robbed of two of our luxuries—drink and sleep! Two new arrivals at midday, whose only news is that British troops are now in N.W. Belgium. Football started on the square. The monotonous horror of this life is just beginning to make itself felt on me. The worst part of the whole thing is the total lack of privacy. There is no room, no corner of a room even, where one can go to escape the incessant racket and babble of talk. Reading and writing are practically impossible.

This evening twelve more English arrived. Learned from them of the transfer of our army from the Aisne to Belgium and realised from their accounts the appalling losses that many regiments seem to have had. One of these new-comers told me of Brad's heroic death when 'L' was smashed up. To the regiment and to the army his loss is great; to those of us who knew him well and were privileged to serve with him, it is irreparable. In everything he did he set up a standard which all of us envied but none of us could attain. He lived as straight as he rode to hounds—and no man rode straighter. To his brilliant mental gifts he added a conscientiousness, a thoroughness, and a quick grasp of detail which seemed to augur a great future. His was a personality which stamped itself indelibly upon all with whom he came in contact, and the influence for good which he wielded over both officers and men had to be seen to be believed. The men feared him, for he was strict and was no respecter of persons; but they loved him too, for he was always just. By his brother officers he was simply worshipped. He was not a typical British officer, he was far more than that, he was an ideal one. He died as he had lived—nobly. And he was an only son.

October 28.—A vile cold has added to my depression of the last few days. A good many new prisoners have been brought in lately—mostly of the 7th Division, which appears by all accounts to have had an awful doing. The battle W. and N.W. of Lille still rages. A French officer retails a rumour that he had heard before

being captured that the Allies had retaken Lille; a Belgian that the Germans are retiring on the West and that our fleet are doing great execution along the coast.

Am now sharing a room with an infantry captain and three subalterns of the same regiment. We have bought cups and saucers and have tea in our room every afternoon. New regulation that we may only write two letters a month.

October 31.—General von Bissing, commanding the district, inspected the Landsturm battalion here to-day. Afterwards he visited some of the prisoners' rooms. Seeing one English officer who, having only just arrived, was far from clean, he asked him through an interpreter how long he had had his breeches. The officer, who imagined that he was being asked how long the British army had been clad in khaki, answered politely, 'Nearly fourteen years!' Whereupon von Bissing was pleased to call our uniform 'Dirty-coloured, disgusting, and bad.' However, I hear his son is a prisoner in France, so perhaps this undignified vituperation relieves his feelings.

November 1.—The Belgian officers departed to-day for some other camp. Rumours of the arrival of 200 Russians not yet fulfilled. Have bought some books, Tauchnitz edition, and tried to settle down to read. We have started the formation of an English library, which will be a blessing.

November 2.—We have often jokingly said: 'We've got English, French, Belgians, and Arabs here—all we want to complete the show is a party of Russians.' Well, now we've got them—200 arrived this evening. Such a scene in the canteen before roll-call! The roar of voices, the atmosphere of tobacco, and the pushing crowd in the bar reminded one of the Empire on a boat-race night—minus the drink!

The authorities with their usual thoughtfulness for our comfort have decreed that the English or French and the Russians are to be mixed up in the rooms in approximately equal numbers. So three of us (G—, T—, and myself) migrated to another block this afternoon and installed ourselves in the beds nearest the window before the arrival of our 'stable companions.' These when they did turn up seemed pleasant enough, but as they could talk no English and only a few words of French, conversation was limited. They could give us no news, having all been prisoners in some other place for two months. One, however, produced a map of Europe and showed us how the German columns were being swept aside—

one apparently to Finland, another to Constantinople, and a third to Rome! Evidently an optimist! '*Neuf millions*' is all the French he knows; it is his estimate of the strength of that portion of the Russian army which is at present mobilised.

November 3.—Letter from home—the first since I left England on August 16. Infinitely cheering; no news, though, owing to fear of the censor, except a few details about the battery on September 1.

November 9.—Overcrowding becoming desperate. A seventh added to our room to-day—a French lieutenant whom we nicknamed Brigadier Gerard, because he's always twirling his moustache in front of the glass. There are so many prisoners here now that we have to have two services for each meal—i.e. breakfast 8 and 9 A.M., lunch 11.45 A.M. and 1.15 P.M., supper 6.45 and 8 P.M. One does a week of each alternately, with the idea presumably that constant change is good for the digestion. But the day consists of fifteen long waking hours all the same. There are moments when I hate all my fellow humans here. A youthful Russian who inhabits this room irritates me almost beyond endurance by singing and whistling the same tune all day long. Poor devil, he's got no books and nothing on earth to do—but if only he'd go and make his noises outside. I find myself unable to fix my mind on anything and sometimes I feel that this life will drive me mad. It's a *hell* of moral, physical and mental inactivity. I'd rather do a year here with a room to myself than six months as things are at present.

November 11.—Somebody got a bundle of old *Daily Graphics* past the censor, I can't think how. As they were the first English papers we'd seen for ages they were most interesting.

November 14.—Howling gale and heavy rain all yesterday and the day before. Hope the German fleet is at sea in it! Have made great friends with Tonnot, the French captain of Colonial Infantry with whom I travelled from Maubeuge. He talks interestingly on a variety of subjects and I am learning a certain amount of French from him. Curious how much more well endowed with the critical spirit the average Frenchman is than the Englishman of a corresponding class. The latter is more inclined to take men and affairs and life for granted.

Am getting anxious about the non-arrival of my parcels. Clothes, books, and tobacco are what I want. Dozens of officers who arrived after me have received parcels. In my saner moments I know

that it is purely a matter of chance, but I have a tendency, when day after day a list of names is put up and mine is not amongst them, to grind my teeth in rage and regard it as a personal spite on the part of the German Government. The arrival of letters and parcels is the only event of any importance in this monotonous life. An officer who receives two or three of either on the same day is regarded in much the same light as, at home, one regards some lucky person who has inherited a fortune. Every pleasure is relative and depends on circumstances. Here, a tin of tobacco and two pairs of pyjamas are joys untold.

November 21.—The same continuous stream of rumours and counter-rumours continues to flow in. Heard this week that Lille had been retaken and that four French corps were marching on Mons. The latter theory borne out by the arrival of some very badly wounded prisoners from the hospital at that place. No confirmation, however. Learnt of the Prime Minister's speech on War loans, in which he stated that the war will not last as long as expected. This is comforting, as he is not given to exaggeration. Perfect weather—dry, frosty, sunny. Long to be on mountains instead of trudging round this damnable square.

November 23.—Immense excitement this evening. Two Russians attempted to escape; they had obtained civilian clothes, passports, and a motor, but were given away by the man whom they had bribed to help them. They now languish in the guard-room. The German authorities spent two hours this evening searching all the rooms, I suppose for money.

November 26.—All the bells in Crefeld ringing this evening and extra editions of the papers announcing the capture of 40,000 Russians. Won't believe it. That's always the tendency—to believe any rumour favourable to us, however wild, and to discredit anything and everything the Germans say.

December 1.—The 'Allies' who live in this room have now been more or less educated by our pantomimic signs of disapproval and make less noise. Have bought some more books and read all day except for an hour's walk in the morning and another in the afternoon or evening. Daren't play football owing to the bullet in my neck.

December 15.—The deadly 'even tenour of our way' continues. Have now bought a small table and a lamp of my own. Ensnconced in the corner behind my bed I can read or work at French in comparative peace. But C—— has had a box of games sent to him—

amongst them (horror of horrors !) ' Pit.' I do draw the line at the room being made into more of a bear-garden than usual by the addition of various strangers who wish to gamble on ' Minoru '—and I foresee trouble and unpleasantness over it. Of course it's selfish of me, but there is no other place where I can go for peace and quiet and—well—we're all inclined to be irritable here. It's a marvel to me that there haven't been more quarrels already.

Wild rumours that Austria is suing for peace with Russia. As usual, no confirmation.

December 18.—To-day Major V—— escaped. Having gone down to the dentist's in the town with two other officers and a sentry, he somehow managed to slip past the latter into the street and find his way out of the town. He speaks German like a native and was wearing a civilian greatcoat. A very sporting effort, as he'll have a bad time if he's caught, I'm afraid. If he can get home and lay our grievances before our authorities there is a chance that, through the American Embassy, the Germans, fearing similar treatment for their prisoners in England, may make things pleasanter for us.

December 19.—Wild scene in the canteen following the announcement that no more tobacco would be sold after the 26th of this month. ' The prisoners are being too well treated ' is apparently the popular clamour in the town. Fierce scrimmage round the bar to purchase what was left. However, the patriotism of the canteen contractor (who, need I say ? is making a fortune out of us) was not equal to his love of gain. He bought up an entire tobacconist's shop, so that we were all able to lay in three or four months' supply.

Rumours that Major V—— had crossed the frontier into Holland. Later, that he had been caught in that country and interned.

Somewhere about this date a score or so of English soldiers arrived here. This was the result of our repeated applications to be allowed to have servants of our own nationality as the Russians and French have. The appearance of these men horrified me. It was not so much that they were thin, white-faced, ragged and dirty, though that was bad enough ; but they had a cowed, bullied look such as I have never seen on the faces of British soldiers before and hope never to see again. Apart from what they told us, it was evident from their appearance that for months they had not been able to call their souls their own and that temporarily, at any rate, all the spirit had been knocked out of them. Better food and treatment will doubtless put them right again.

December 25.—Christmas Day is Christmas Day even in prison.

In the morning we held a service and sang the proper hymns with zest. At lunch we were given venison (said to be from the Kaiser's preserves) and had some of an enormous plum-pudding which T—— had had sent him. Then suddenly we rose as one man, toasted the King (in water and lemonade) and sang the National Anthem. The French officers followed with the Marseillaise and until that moment I had never realised what a wonderful air it is. Then the Russians, conducted by an aged white-haired colonel, sang their National Hymn quite beautifully. And we all shouted and cheered together.

Into our room this afternoon, when we were all lying on our beds in a state of coma after too liberal a ration of plum-pudding, there burst the N.C.O. of the guard and four armed men. He shouted at us in German and we gathered from his gestures that he was accusing us of looking out of the window and making faces at the sentry. However, as we all went on reading and took not the slightest notice of him, I think we had the best of it. I imagine that, it being Christmas Day, he had 'drink taken,' as one says in Ireland. We complained to the senior British officer, who saw the commandant about it. This sort of thing is becoming intolerable. The other night the guard entered a room, seized an unfortunate English officer (it is always the English), accused him of having had a light on after hours, although actually he was asleep at the time, and dragged him off to the guard-room, where he spent the night without blankets.

This evening we feasted on a turkey which we had bought and had had cooked for us in the canteen, and more plum-pudding. Afterwards we sang various songs, including 'Rule, Britannia' (which the Germans hate more than anything) until roll-call. I think 'Auld Lang Syne' produced a choky feeling in the throats of most of us—so many are gone for ever. The authorities, fearing a riot, doubled all the pickets—and it was a cold night!

December 27.—It has been announced that, as a punishment for the escape of Major V——, all smoking will be prohibited from January 2 to 15; all tobacco is to be handed in at 10 A.M. on the 2nd. I wonder if we'll ever see it again. I dread this fortnight's abstinence.

December 28.—Received £5; also parcels containing food, books, clothes, and tobacco.

January 2, 1915.—Tobacco duly handed in and receipt given for it. Some mild excitement caused over a letter which I had

received from F. P——, who is in India, part of which had been censored. The commandant here wanted it back again. Fortunately I had destroyed it. I had not been able to read the censored part, but had gathered from the preceding sentence that it was something about the Indian troops. Wonder what the Boches are after. Anyway I was hauled up before the permanent orderly officer, who is an aged subaltern of at least sixty, known to the French as 'l'asperge' because he is long and thin and looks exactly like an asparagus stalk when he's got his helmet on; and to us as 'the chemist' because he has rather the air of a suave and elderly member of the Pharmaceutical Society. As a matter of fact, he is a baron! For a German, he was quite polite, believed me when I told him I had destroyed the letter and seemed relieved when I mentioned that it was dated September 13—which was true.

News gets scarcer and scarcer, German papers emptier and emptier. But there are signs of shortage in the country. No more rolls or white bread for us, for example.

January 5.—Managed to smuggle through the parcels office a tin of 100 cigarettes which had arrived for me, but resisted the temptation to open it. If anyone was caught smoking during this fortnight it would mean no more tobacco for any of us for months if not for ever. All the same, I find the privation hard to bear.

January 8.—It has become evident that the authorities do not desire to take further steps in the tobacco question. Yesterday 'the chemist' searched various rooms. Entering one he found several Russians smoking—whereupon he left without comment. This was the act of a gentleman. This evening, therefore, we broached my tin of cigarettes. Crouching round the stove we smoked them very carefully, blowing the smoke up the chimney. Rather like schooldays and very ridiculous. Tobacco never tasted so good to me.

To-day one of the Russians who was implicated in the attempt to escape some weeks ago returned here. His rôle in the affair had been to stand at the gate and keep watch while the other two slipped out to the motor. All three of them, he says, have been kept handcuffed, in solitary confinement, ever since, and fed only on black bread and weak coffee—and this *whilst awaiting trial*! Eventually his case was dismissed, as it was not proved that he was attempting to escape. The other two are to undergo imprisonment for six more weeks. They are desperate and want to commit suicide. And this is civilised warfare in the twentieth century.

It is nearly a month since we had any fresh German official *communiqués* posted up in the dining-hall. Perhaps it is a sign that things are going badly for them. From rumours it appears that Turkey is getting a bad time from Russia—and so is Austria.

The quality of the food is rapidly deteriorating. The bread is black, sour and hard, with a large proportion of potato flour in it. The meat is generally uneatable. Fortunately supplies are coming fairly regularly from home and we subsist almost entirely on potted meats, tongues, &c.

January 14.—The Russian New Year's Day. Went to their Church service and was greatly impressed by the solemnity of it; also by their beautiful singing. Toasted the Russian army at lunch; much bowing and scraping and a great interchange of compliments.

January 25.—Heard to-day of the second battle of Heligoland and of the sinking of the *Blücher*—Good. Amused to notice that the German papers claim this fight as a great victory—a Trafalgar, they called it. Prefer to believe the statement of our Admiralty—quoted by the Crefeld paper with many sneering comments and notes of exclamation interspersed.

There is, I think, no doubt that Germany has begun to feel the pinch. The altered manner of our 'kindly captors' towards us is remarkable. There is a good deal less of the haughty conqueror about them.

The authorities here are compiling a list of those prisoners who are wounded and unfit for further service. An astonishing number of officers were brought forward by the doctors of each nationality for examination by the German medico! Particulars of our cases were taken down, to be forwarded to Berlin. I fear that, as far as I am concerned, there is not much chance of getting sent home.

February 3.—Permission granted to us to write eight letters a month instead of two. Perhaps this is due to pressure brought to bear since the arrival home of V—. We knew he'd reached England safely some time ago, but have heard no details as to how he did it. Women conductors on the trams in Crefeld now; and Carl, a German waiter, late of the Grosvenor Hotel and at present underling here to the canteen manager, is under orders for the front. Both facts are significant, especially the latter, seeing that the aforesaid Carl is as good a specimen of the physically unfit as one could wish to see.

February 7.—Marked improvement of German manners
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continues unabated. Carl still here. The civilian who heats the furnace for the bathroom (doubtless an authority!) confesses quite openly that Germany is beaten, that he has been convinced of it for months and believes nothing he sees in the papers.

Our hosts having now condescended to allow us to hire musical instruments, and having even granted us a garret to play them in, we enjoyed quite a pleasant concert this evening. But the crowd and the atmosphere were awful. The orchestra surprisingly good, considering its haphazard formation: and a Russian peasant chorus beautifully rendered.

February 8.—Fine day with a grand feeling of spring in the air. Heading in a German paper: 'The enemy takes one of our trenches near La Bassée.' But what an admission! Am convinced that at last the German *people* are beginning to realise what their Government must have known from the time when the first great rush on Paris failed—namely that there can only be one end to this war for them—defeat.

February 10.—Received a second £5 from Cox within three weeks. He must have lost his head on finding me with a balance credit for about the first time in my career.

February 11.—There was a rumour to-night, apparently with some foundation in it, that the first batch of wounded to be exchanged (two English and nine French) are to go on Monday. I continue to hope that I may get away later on, but can't really feel there is much chance, as there is so little permanently wrong with me.

February 12.—The incredible has happened. I'm to be sent home! I hardly dare believe it. This afternoon Major D—, R—, and myself were sent for by the commandant and told to be ready to start at 9 o'clock to-morrow. He further informed us that the authorities knew that our wounds were not very serious, so that he hoped we would realise the clemency of the Imperial Government. We were made to give our word of honour not to take any letters, &c. from prisoners with us. Finally, after an interview with the paymaster, who squared up our accounts, we went through a ceremonious leave-taking with the commandant and 'the chemist.' Felt quite sorry for the latter; he looks so old and careworn and has lost two sons in the war, I believe. Spent the evening packing my few paltry possessions in a hamper I managed to buy in the canteen. Found it very difficult to conceal my elation from all the poor devils we will leave behind to-morrow. Far too excited to sleep.

February 13, Saturday.—The Germans evidently have been instructed to make things as pleasant as possible for us. A taxi provided at 8.30 and a most suave N.C.O. to accompany us. A large crowd of fellow-prisoners assembled at the gate to see us off. In spite of the depression they all must have felt at watching us go, not one of them showed a sign of it. They were just splendid—French, Russians, and English—and wished us ‘Good luck,’ ‘Bon voyage,’ and whatever the Slavonic equivalent may be, as though they themselves might be following at any date, instead of having to look forward to months and months more of that awful dreary life.

At 8.35 turned out of the gate for ever.

At the station H—— joined us from the hospital; being partially paralysed he was carried on a stretcher. R.’s kilt caused considerable interest, but the onlookers, evidently knowing our circumstances, were not in the least offensive—very different from four months ago. We were taken charge of by an N.C.O. whom we knew well, as he was employed at the barracks. He became most friendly, aired his small knowledge of English, and continually asked us if we were glad to be going home. What a question! When we changed trains and had about an hour to wait he ordered our lunch for us and saw that we had everything that we wanted. Travelling *via* Münster we reached Osnabrück at about 4 P.M. and were conveyed in a motor to the hospital. Had thought, ever since last night, that I could never be depressed again, but the sight of the ward with nearly fifty empty beds in it, the smell of iodoform and the whole atmosphere of the place had that effect on all of us for a bit. Found another English officer here, wounded in the head months ago, and still partially paralysed, but recovering. He is to join us. Gathered from listening to his experiences that one might have been in much worse places than Crefeld. No information as to when we are to move on. Later in evening another officer arrived—one leg shorter than the other as the result of a broken thigh. Found the soft, comfortable hospital bed most pleasant after the hard mattresses of the prison.

February 14.—Spent a long, dull day confined to the ward; occasionally we were visited by some of the German wounded, of whom there were many, more or less convalescent, in the hospital. They were quite agreeable. Have noticed that the hate and malice engendered by the authorities against the English manifests itself more amongst those Germans who have not been to the front. Men

who have actually been there and have come back wounded are far more inclined to sympathise with fellow sufferers than to make themselves offensive. Moreover, I take it that by this time the front line troops have acquired a wholesome respect for the British army.

About midday we were all examined by a German doctor. This was nervous work, especially for R—— and myself—we both being far from permanently disabled. However, we seemed to satisfy his requirements. In the evening an aged Teuton in shabby waiter's evening dress came and informed us that we could order anything we liked to eat or drink if we chose to pay for it. Evidently he was acting under instructions to make himself pleasant. Anyway we ordered a good dinner but confined ourselves to beer. Still no news of when we are to start, but presumably it will be soon because of the 'blockade,' which starts on the 18th.

February 15.—This morning a board of four German doctors made a careful examination of all of us. They came in so unexpectedly that I was obliged surreptitiously to withdraw the plug from the hole in my palate and swallow it! However, I managed to convince them that I could neither eat, drink nor speak properly and they passed me without demur. Am sure that I went pale with fright at the prospect of being dragged back to prison again and perhaps this fact was of assistance to me. There was a long consultation over R——. He was asked if he was capable of instructing troops in musketry; whereupon he proceeded to explain that, in spite of his three years' service, he himself was still under instruction! In the end we were all passed as incapacitated.

We were told this afternoon that we might start to-night, but nothing definite. At 7 P.M. were ordered to be ready in half an hour. Hurried on our specially ordered dinner and split three bottles of wine amongst us. At 7.45 started for the station in motors and were then put on board an ambulance train. The 'sitting-up' cases had distinctly the best of it here; we were in comfortable second-class carriages, whereas the others were put in slung-stretchers in cattle trucks. As this same train is to fetch back the exchanged German wounded from Flushing, there was evidently no malice aforethought in this rough and ready accommodation: presumably it is the best they can produce. On the train are seven officers, 200 or so N.C.O.'s and men, a few German nurses and Red Cross men, and one civilian doctor. Started at 8.45 and reached the Dutch frontier just after midnight.

February 16.—Had dozed off but woke up when we reached the frontier and was much amused when the Dutch Customs officials came and asked us if we had anything to declare! They even pretended to search our few miserable belongings. Can never forget the kindness of the Dutch both here and everywhere we stopped all through the journey to Flushing. They crowded into the carriages; they showered food, tobacco, cigarettes, sweets, fruit, even English books and papers on us; they forgot nothing. If they'd been our own personal friends they could have done no more for us. Dutch doctors and guards boarded the train at the frontier, and also an English newspaper correspondent with whom we talked for a couple of hours, gradually picking up the thread of all that had happened since we were cut off from the outer world. An exhilarating feeling to have left Germany behind and to be amongst friends again.

Reached Flushing about 10.30 and were welcomed by the British Consul and by several English people over there in connection with Belgian relief work. Their hospitality was unbounded. Had a merry lunch with them in the hotel, and then strolled out to see the town—followed by a large and noisy crowd of school children. But what a joy to be a free man, to be able to go where one likes and do what one likes! Wired home.

In the afternoon the boat which is to take us back arrived from England with the German wounded. The two batches of men were close together on the platform. What a contrast! the Germans, clean, well-cared for, dressed either in comparatively serviceable uniform or new civilian clothes; the English, white-faced, pinched and careworn, in threadbare khaki (some even in tattered French or Belgian uniform) with no buttons, most of them with no hats or badges. At first our men were indignant—they had suffered much, and it was evident to them that the treatment of prisoners in the two countries was very different. But soon the inherent chivalry of the British private soldier overcame his other feelings. The Germans were enemies but they were wounded—cripples for life most of them—and they too were going Home. It formed a bond between the two groups. In five minutes cigarettes were being exchanged and conversation (aided by signs) in full swing.

There was an English corporal, paralysed, lying on a stretcher in the waiting-room. I helped one of the English ladies to take him some tea. She knelt beside him, put the cup to his lips and, when

he had drunk, asked him how he felt. For a moment he didn't answer but merely stared at her with great dark wondering eyes. Then he said slowly: 'Are you English?' That was all, just those three words, but they expressed everything—the misery of all the months he had been in foreign hands, his patience, his suffering, and now at long last his infinite content at finding one of his own country-women bending over him. His head dropped wearily back on to the pillow and he closed his eyes; he was happy.

Had dinner at the hotel where we met the doctors who had come over with the Germans and who were to go back with us. Afterwards went on board the boat which, however, was not to start till the morning. To my dying day I shall remember sitting in the saloon and watching the sad procession of two hundred crippled N.C.O.s and men being brought on board. There were paralysed cases on stretchers, blind men, deaf men, men with an arm or a leg gone, dozens hopelessly lame manœuvring their crutches with difficulty, helping each other, laughing at each other—happy enough for the moment. But oh! the pity of it. What of the future of these maimed and broken men? They are happy now because they're thinking only of to-morrow, but what of the day after, what of the thousands of days after? England is proverbially ungrateful to her lesser kind of heroes as well as to her greater kind of poets. Geniuses have been known to starve in garrets—and so have Balaclava survivors. These men deserve well of their country. Will they be remembered or forgotten?

Went to bed late, again too excited to sleep. Feel at last that it's a reality and not a dream.

February 17.—Woke to find that the boat had started, that it was blowing half a gale, raining hard and that we were in for a vile crossing. Too happy to be ill, however. A large number of Belgian refugees on board. Talked to several of our men. All their stories tallied in essentials. They had been under-fed, under-clothed, singled out for all the disagreeable work and all the abuse—*because they were English*. Watched them playing cards, helping anxious Belgian mothers with their sea-sick children. Listened to their talk and laughter and choruses, of which the most popular was a version of 'Tipperary' which stated that the Kaiser would have a long way to go to St. Helena. At intervals, every half-hour or so, a mighty shout would go up, 'Are we downhearted?' and all the crutches would rattle on the deck before the crashing answer, 'No.'

Disembarked at Folkestone Pier at about six P.M. No fuss, no worry, everything done in perfect order. A buffet on the platform provided us with English tea and English buns (there can be great joy in a common penny bun) served by English ladies. The rain streamed down out of the inky sky as the long ambulance train puffed its way out of the station at 8 P.M. Even the weather was typically English, as if to welcome us! Everything for our comfort had been thought of. In our saloon were flowers, great bunches of violets, and a gramophone. And so at last, just before eleven, we rolled over the darkened Thames and drew up in Charing Cross—Home.

PRESS BUREAU : Passed for Publication.

THE GARDENER OF EDEN.

HE was so old that the shape of his body had long ago become that of a question mark. But he had the skin of an apple and the eye of a robin and the first created twinkle. But for that twinkle he might have been a baptist. He was raking a flower-bed near the gate. This gate was always kept locked now, and only the immediate householders had keys. It had not been always so, but times had changed. There were more people about, and one had to be careful. That was why, when an elderly lady rattled it, he looked at the gate and not at the lady.

But it was soundly fastened, and in a minute or two she would discover her mistake and pass on. People were doing that every day. He removed his pipe, spat on the gravel, and continued gently to rake the bed.

'Hi!' said the lady, 'don't you remember me? Won't you let me in?'

This time he looked at the lady, but without recognition. She was very well dressed and had forgotten her age.

'Don't you remember me?' she said. 'I remember you.'

He pushed back his hat, made a mental note that it was rather warm for April, and brought his memory to bear on the lady who said that she remembered him.

'Well, in a manner of speaking,' he said, 'you might be two or three. You're not Miss Eve, now, by any chance?'

'Yes, I am. Only I'm a married woman, you know, and—and almost a grandmother.'

He waddled to the gate, and they shook hands through it. It did not occur to him to open it.

'But won't you let me in?'

'Well, it's against the rules.'

'Oh, bother the rules. I used to belong here.'

He considered his position, felt in his pocket, and opened the gate with an air of indulgence. He believed in rules, but knew that they were children, and that it was sometimes wise to ignore them. She gave him a smile that brought her youth back and stirred a second ancient memory.

'I shouldn't wonder,' he chuckled, 'if you keep your eyes open, if you saw your little friend.'

'My little friend?'

'Young Master Adam.'

She frowned for a moment.

'Adam—oh, now I remember, of course. But how charming.'

'He comes and stays here. One of his daughters is married to a gentleman in the square.'

'Really! How interesting. And how are *you*?'

She was looking about her with quick eyes that were still lively though she must have been fifty.

'Oh, middling,' he said; 'mustn't grumble. You're looking first-rate, mum, if I may say so.'

She smiled at him.

'Why of course you may; but—but——' She looked round again, a little puzzled. 'But is this all there is left?'

He glanced up at her—she stood above him now—with his bright, bird-like eye.

'How do you mean?' he said. 'It's just the same.'

'But it seems so small. I can see right across it.'

'Well, of course,' he said; 'so can I.'

She was quick to notice and conciliate a certain note of injured pride. And he noticed the conciliation. It meant something new in her. She must have picked it up since she left.

'But your borders,' she said, 'are simply lovely, and those hyacinths—they're *grands maitres*, aren't they?—and those tulips by the shrubbery.'

'Yes, they're middling,' he admitted, 'though I've seen better in my time.'

'And where's Adam?' she asked.

'I don't know,' he said, 'but in a small place like this he oughtn't to be far.'

She looked at him quickly with amused eyes.

'Ah, now you're angry,' she said, 'and your pipe's gone out'—there had been a time when she wouldn't have noticed *that*—'and you can't think how delightful for me it is to come back here.'

He permitted himself a grumble.

'Yes, that's all very well,' he said, 'but how would you like to stay here always?'

She was silent for a moment, regarding him gravely.

'Do you know,' she said at last, 'that's rather a searching question?'

'Then be very careful, madam, how you answer it,' said a mellow voice behind her.

Down a side-path there had come a middle-aged gentleman a little inclined to be stout. He lifted his hat with a pleasant smile, and then looked at her rather hard.

'Why, dear me,' he said.

She held out her hand.

'Why, it's Adam,' she cried.

'And you're Eve.'

They surveyed each other with instructed but perfectly tolerant eyes. She saw that he was lined and a little gouty and employed an expensive tailor. He noticed that she was a little preserved, but very discreetly, and knew precisely what suited her. Then they both laughed.

'So you've come back, too,' he said.

'Yes, I've come back. Isn't it all quai—' she remembered the gardener, 'delicious and flowery—and those beautiful tulips?'

'Let's go and look at them,' said Adam.

'You're sure you don't mind?' she asked the gardener.

'Oh, not at all, mum. I'll be getting on with the bed.'

They strolled into the garden.

'Dear old man,' she murmured.

'Yes, and you were so wise with him.'

'How do you mean?'

'I couldn't help hearing, you know; and tact——'

Her face dimpled a little.

'Yes, we hadn't very much tact,' she said, 'when we were here before.'

'No,' he agreed; 'emotionally speaking, we were both a little bit naked, I'm afraid. Let's sit down.'

They found a seat under the trees.

'We had to go outside to find tact.'

'And now,' she said, 'you have a daughter in the square.'

'Yes, indeed, and two grandsons.'

'And a wife?' she asked.

'A very dear one.'

She laid a plump hand on his knee.

'I'm very glad.'

'And you yourself—are you going strong?—have you been happy?'

'Don't I look it?'

He glanced at her and smiled.

'Yes, I think you do,' he said; 'life must have been kind to you—and to your husband.'

They sat for a moment, looking in front of them at the pretty, dwindled lawns.

'That's very nice of you,' she said presently, 'but you didn't always talk like that.'

'No, I'm afraid not,' he said; 'I rather looked upon you as having been made for my special benefit. Boys are like that.'

'And so they ought to be. I was quite content.'

'Yes—until you found out.'

'You mean when that other boy—'

'Yes, don't you remember? Now what was his name? You used to flirt with him.'

'So I did, but my memory's so bad. Wasn't it something beginning with S?'

'Yes, I believe it was—' he wrinkled his brow; 'well, I give it up, and it doesn't much matter. He was rather an unhappy little person who knew some natural history and thought it naughty.'

They considered him for a moment before dismissing him from their minds.

'And had no humour,' he added presently.

'Well, we hadn't too much ourselves.'

'No, I suppose not,' he said. 'I hadn't thought of that. That was another thing we had to go outside for.'

'And by the way,' he inquired in a minute, 'what was it that brought you back?'

'Chiefly a whim, but I had just been reading a little piece of poetry about the place.'

'Yes, I saw that too,' he said, 'and how difficult it was to get in again.'

He paused for a moment.

'And did you find it so?'

'Not if this is really the garden.'

He glanced at her quickly.

'Full of the beasts that talked to us? No, it's not that, I'm afraid, any more.'

'That's what I mean. We haven't *really* come back.'

The sun had set now, or the earth moved a little, and Adam rose to his feet.

'I wonder if you'd mind,' he said; 'it's my left shoulder. I have to be rather careful.'

She rose quickly.

'Not at all,' she said; 'my husband has the same thing.'

He became a little excited.

'You don't say so. What does he take for it? Who's his man?'

As they returned to the gate he pulled out his watch.

'Now I wonder,' he said, 'if you would be free to have just a quiet little dinner with me?'

She pondered for a moment. Her husband was away.

'Yes, I think I might.'

'Well, that's capital.'

He named an hotel.

'It's a charming old place,' he said, 'with an Adam ceiling and some really excellent Moët and Chandon.'

They stood at the gate.

'Moët and Chandon,' he smiled, 'and an Adam ceiling—we had to leave the garden to find those too.'

'And a child's kiss,' said Eve.

'Yes, and that.'

They shook hands with the gardener, who had been glad to see them, but watched them depart without envy. For himself, he was quite satisfied where he was. He liked the children, when they weren't nuisances, and some of the more elderly of the nurses; and his flowers, he considered, were as intelligent as any of them. Even at this moment, for instance, in the cool of the evening, they were obviously listening for Someone's footstep.

H. H. BASHFORD.

'K.'¹

BY MARY ROBERTS RINEHART.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THIS IS LIFE.

K. saw Sidney for only a moment on Christmas Day. This was when the gay little sleigh had stopped in front of the house. Sidney had hurried radiantly in for a moment. Christine's parlour was gay with firelight, and noisy with chatter and with the clatter of her tea-cups.

K., lounging indolently in front of the fire, had turned to see Sidney in the doorway, and leaped to his feet.

'I can't come in,' she cried. 'I am only here for a moment. I am out sleigh-riding with Dr. Wilson. It's perfectly delightful.'

'Ask him in for a cup of tea,' Christine called. 'Here's Aunt Harriet and mother and even Palmer!'

Christine had aged during the last weeks, but she was putting up a brave front.

'I'll ask him.'

Sidney ran to the front door and called: 'Will you come in for a cup of tea?'

'Tea! Good heavens, no. Hurry.'

As Sidney turned back into the house, she met Palmer. He had come out in the hall, and had closed the door into the parlour behind him. His arm was still in splints, and swung suspended in a gay silk sling.

The sound of laughter came through the door faintly.

'How is he to-day?' He meant Johnny, of course. The boy's face was always with him.

'Better in some ways, but of course——'

'When are they going to operate?'

'When he is a little stronger. Why don't you come in to see him?'

'I can't. That's the truth. I can't face the poor youngster.'

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'He doesn't seem to blame you ; he says it's all in the game.'

'Sidney, does Christine know that I was not alone that night ?'

'If she guesses, it is not because of anything the boy has said. He has told nothing.'

Out of the firelight, away from the chatter and the laughter, Palmer's face showed worn and haggard. He put his free hand on Sidney's shoulder.

'I was thinking that perhaps, if I went away——'

'That would be cowardly, wouldn't it ?'

'If Christine would only say something and get it over with ! She doesn't sulk ; I think she's really trying to be kind. But she hates me, Sidney. She turns pale every time I touch her hand.'

All the light had died out of Sidney's face. Life was terrible, after all—overwhelming. One did wrong things, and other people suffered ; or one was good, as her mother had been, and was left lonely, a widow, or like Aunt Harriet. Life was a sham, too. Things were so different from what they seemed to be : Christine, beyond the door, pouring tea and laughing, with her heart in ashes ; Palmer beside her, faultlessly dressed, and wretched. The only one she thought was really contented was K. He seemed to move so calmly in his little orbit. He was always so steady, so balanced. If life held no heights for him, at least it held no depths. So Sidney thought, in her ignorance !

'There's only one thing, Palmer,' she said gravely. 'Johnny Rosenfeld is going to have his chance. If anybody in the world can save him, Max Wilson can.'

The light of that speech was in her eyes when she went out to the sleigh again. K. followed her out and tucked the robes in carefully about her.

'Warm enough ?'

'All right, thank you.'

'Don't go too far. Is there any chance of having you home for supper ?'

'I think not. I am to go on duty at six again.'

If there was a shadow in K.'s eyes, she did not see it. He waved them off smilingly from the pavement, and went rather heavily back into the house.

'Just how many men are in love with you, Sidney ?' asked Max, as Peggy started up the Street.

'No one that I know of, unless——'

'Exactly. Unless——'

'What I meant,' she said with dignity, 'is that unless one counts very young men, and that isn't really love.'

'We'll leave out Joe Drummond and myself—for, of course, I am very young. Who is in love with you besides Le Moyne? Any of the house surgeons at the hospital?'

'Me! Le Moyne is not in love with me.'

There was such sincerity in her voice that Wilson was relieved.

K., older than himself and more grave, had always had an odd attraction for women. He had been frankly bored by them, but the fact had remained. And Max more than suspected that now, at last, he had been caught.

'Don't you really mean that you are in love with Le Moyne?'

'Please don't be absurd. I am not in love with anybody; I haven't time to be in love. I have my profession now.'

'Bah! A woman's real profession is love.'

Sidney differed from this hotly. So warm did the argument become that they passed without seeing a middle-aged gentleman, short and rather heavy set, struggling through a snowdrift on foot, and carrying in his hand a dilapidated leather bag.

Dr. Ed hailed them. But the cutter slipped by and left him knee-deep, looking ruefully after them.

'The young scamp!' he said. 'So that's where Peggy is!'

Nevertheless, there was no anger in Dr. Ed's mind, only a vague and inarticulate regret. These things that came so easily to Max, the affection of women, gay little irresponsibilities like the stealing of Peggy and the sleigh, had never been his. If there was any faint resentment, it was at himself. He had raised the boy wrong—he had taught him to be selfish. Holding the bag high out of the drifts, he made his slow progress up the Street.

At something after two o'clock that night, K. put down his pipe and listened. He had not been able to sleep since midnight. In his dressing-gown he had sat by the small fire, thinking. The content of his first few months on the Street was rapidly giving way to unrest. He who had meant to cut himself off from life found himself again in close touch with it; his eddy was deep with it.

For the first time, he had begun to question the wisdom of what he had done. Had it been cowardice, after all? It had taken courage, God knew, to give up everything and come away. In a way, it would have taken more courage to have stayed. Had he been right or wrong?

And there was a new element. He had thought, at first, that he could fight down this love for Sidney. But it was increasingly hard. The innocent touch of her hand on his arm, the moment when he had held her in his arms after her mother's death, the thousand small contacts of her returns to the little house—all these set his blood on fire. And it was fighting blood.

Under his quiet exterior K. fought many conflicts those winter days—over his desk and ledger at the office, in his room alone, with Harriet planning fresh triumphs beyond the partition, even by Christine's fire, with Christine just across, sitting in silence and watching his grave profile and steady eyes.

He had a little picture of Sidney—a snapshot that he had taken himself. It showed Sidney minus a hand, which had been out of range when the camera had been snapped, and standing on a steep declivity, which would have been quite a level had he held the camera straight. Nevertheless it was Sidney, her hair blowing about her, eyes looking out, tender lips smiling. When she was not at home, it sat on K.'s dresser, propped against his collar-box. When she was in the house, it lay under the pincushion.

Two o'clock in the morning, then, and K. in his dressing-gown, with the picture propped, not against the collar-box, but against his lamp, where he could see it.

He sat forward in his chair, his hands folded around his knee, and looked at it. He was trying to picture the Sidney of the photograph in his old life—trying to find a place for her. But it was difficult. There had been few women in his old life. His mother had died many years ago. There had been women who had cared for him, but he put them impatiently out of his mind.

Then the bell rang.

Christine was moving about below. He could hear her quick steps. Almost before he had heaved his long legs out of the chair, she was tapping at his door outside.

'It's Mrs. Rosenfeld. She said she wants to see you.'

He went down the stairs. Mrs. Rosenfeld was standing in the lower hall, a shawl about her shoulders. Her face was white and drawn above it.

'I've had word to go to the hospital,' she said. 'I thought maybe you'd go with me. I seems as if I can't stand it alone. Oh, Johnny, Johnny!'

'Where's Palmer?' K. demanded of Christine.

'He's not in yet.'

'Are you afraid to stay in the house alone?'

'No; please go.'

He ran up the staircase to his room and flung on some clothing. In the lower hall, Mrs. Rosenfeld's sobs had become low moans. Christine stood helplessly over her.

'I am terribly sorry,' she said—'terribly sorry! When I think whose fault all this is!'

Mrs. Rosenfeld put out a work-hardened hand and caught Christine's fingers.

'Never mind that,' she said. 'You didn't do it. I guess you and I understand each other. Only pray God you never have a child.'

K. never forgot the scene in the small emergency ward to which Johnny had been taken. Under the white lights his boyish figure looked strangely long. There was a group around the bed—Max Wilson, two or three house surgeons, the night nurse on duty, and the Head.

Sitting just inside the door on a straight chair was Sidney—such a Sidney as he never had seen before, her face colourless, her eyes wide and unseeing, her hands clenched in her lap. When he stood beside her, she did not move to look up. The group around the bed had parted to admit Mrs. Rosenfeld, and closed again. Only Sidney and K. remained by the door, isolated, alone.

'You must not take it like that, dear. It's sad, of course. But, after all, in that condition—'

It was her first knowledge that he was there. But she did not turn.

'They say I poisoned him.' Her voice was dreary, inflectionless.

'You—what?'

'They say I gave him the wrong medicine; that he's dying; that I murdered him.' She shivered.

K. touched her hands. They were ice-cold.

'Tell me about it.'

'There is nothing to tell. I came on duty at six o'clock and gave the medicines. When the night nurse came on at seven, everything was all right. The medicine-tray was just as it should be. Johnny was asleep. I went to say good night to him and he—he was asleep. I didn't give him anything but what was on the tray,' she finished piteously. 'I looked at the label; I always look.'

By a shifting of the group around the bed, K.'s eyes looked for
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a moment directly into Carlotta's. Just for a moment; then the crowd closed up again. It was well for Carlotta that it did. She looked as if she had seen a ghost—closed her eyes, even reeled.

'Miss Harrison is worn out,' Dr. Wilson said brusquely. 'Get someone else to take her place.'

But Carlotta rallied. After all, the presence of this man in this room at such a time meant nothing. He was Sidney's friend, that was all.

But her nerve was shaken. The thing had gone beyond her. She had not meant to kill. It was the boy's weakened condition that was turning her revenge into tragedy.

'I am all right,' she pleaded across the bed to the Head. 'Let me stay, please. He's from my ward. I—I am responsible.'

Wilson was at his wits' end. He had done everything he knew without result. The boy, rousing for an instant, would lapse again into stupor. With a healthy man they could have tried more vigorous measures; could have forced him to his feet and walked him about, could have beat him with knotted towels dipped in ice-water. But the wrecked body on the bed could stand no such heroic treatment.

It was Le Moyne, after all, who saved Johnny Rosenfeld's life. For when staff and nurses had exhausted all their resources he stepped forward with a quiet word that brought the house surgeons to their feet astonished.

There was a new treatment for such cases—it had been tried abroad. He looked at Max.

Max had never heard of it. He threw out his hand.

'Try it, for heaven's sake,' he said. 'I'm all in.'

The apparatus was not in the house—must be extemporised, indeed, at last of odds and ends from the operating-room. K. did the work, his long fingers deft and skilful, while Mrs. Rosenfeld knelt by the bed with her face buried, while Sidney sat, dazed and bewildered, on her little chair inside the door, while night nurses tiptoed along the corridor, and the night watchman stared incredulous from outside the door.

When the two great rectangles that were the emergency ward windows had turned from mirrors reflecting the room to grey rectangles in the morning light, Johnny Rosenfeld opened his eyes and spoke the first words that marked his return from the dark valley.

'Gee, this is the life!' he said, and smiled into K.'s watchful face.

When it was clear that the boy would live, K. rose stiffly from the bedside and went over to Sidney's chair.

'He's all right now,' he said—'as all right as he can be, poor lad!'

'You did it—you! How strange that you should know such a thing. How am I to thank you?'

The house surgeons, talking among themselves, had wandered down to their dining-room for early coffee. Wilson was giving a few last instructions as to the boy's care. Quite unexpectedly, Sidney caught K.'s hand and held it to her lips. The iron repression of the night, of months indeed, fell away before her simple caress.

'My dear, my dear,' he said huskily. 'Anything that I can do—for you—at any time——'

It was after Sidney had crept like a broken thing to her room that Carlotta Harrison and K. came face to face. Johnny was quite conscious by that time, a little blue around the lips, but valiantly cheerful.

'More things can happen to a fellow than I ever knew there was!' he said to his mother, and submitted rather sheepishly to her tears and caresses.

'You were always a good boy, Johnny,' she said. 'Just you get well enough to come home. I'll take care of you the rest of my life. We will get you a wheel-chair when you can be about, and I can take you out in the park when I come from work.'

'I'll be passenger and you'll be chauffeur, ma.'

'Mr. Le Moyne is going to get your father sent up again. With sixty-five cents a day and what I make, we'll get along.'

'You bet we will!'

'Oh, Johnny, if I could see you coming in the door again and yelling "mother" and "supper" in one breath!'

The meeting between Carlotta and Le Moyne was very quiet. She had been making a sort of subconscious impression on the retina of his mind during all the night. It would be difficult to tell when he actually knew her.

When the preparations for moving Johnny back to the big ward had been made, the other nurses left the room, and Carlotta and the boy were together. K. stopped her on her way to the door.

'Miss Harrison!'

'Yes, Dr. Edwardes.'

'I am not Dr. Edwardes here; my name is Le Moyne.'

'Ah!'

'I have not seen you since you left St. John's.'

'No; I—I rested for a few months.'

'I suppose they do not know that you were—that you have had any previous hospital experience.'

'No. Are you going to tell them?'

'I shall not tell them, of course.'

And thus, by simple mutual consent, it was arranged that each should respect the other's confidence.

Carlotta staggered to her room. There had been a time, just before dawn, when she had had one of those swift revelations that sometimes come at the end of a long night. She had seen herself as she was. The boy was very low, hardly breathing. Her past stretched behind her, a series of small revenges and passionate outbursts, swift yieldings, slow remorse. She dared not look ahead. She would have given every hope she had in the world, just then, for Sidney's stainless past.

She hated herself with that deadliest loathing that comes of complete self-revelation.

And she carried to her room the knowledge that the night's struggle had been in vain—that, although Johnny Rosenfeld would live, she had gained nothing by what he had suffered. The whole night had shown her the hopelessness of any stratagem to win Wilson from his new allegiance. She had surprised him in the hallway, watching Sidney's slender figure as she made her way up the stairs to her room. Never, in all his past overtures to her, had she seen that look in his eyes.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RETURN.

To Harriet Kennedy, Sidney's sentence of thirty days' suspension came as a blow. K. broke the news to her that evening before time for Sidney's arrival.

The little household was sharing in Harriet's prosperity. Katie had a helper now, a little Austrian girl named Mimi. And Harriet had established on the Street the innovation of after-dinner coffee. It was over the after-dinner coffee that K. made his announcement.

'What do you mean by saying she is coming home for thirty days? Is the child ill?'

'Not ill, although she is not quite well. The fact is, Harriet,'—for it was 'Harriet' and 'K.' by this time—'there has been a sort of semi-accident up at the hospital. It hasn't resulted seriously, but——'

Harriet put down the apostle spoon in her hand and stared across at him.

'Then she has been suspended? What did she do? I don't believe she did anything.'

'There was a mistake about the medicine, and she was blamed; that's all.'

'She'd better come home and stay home,' said Harriet shortly. 'I hope it doesn't get in the papers. This dressmaking business is a funny sort of thing. One word against you or any of your family, and the crowd's off somewhere else.'

'There's nothing against Sidney,' K. reminded her. 'Nothing in the world. I saw the superintendent myself this afternoon. It seems it's a mere matter of discipline. Somebody made a mistake, and they cannot let such a thing go by. But he believes, as I do, that it was not Sidney.'

However Harriet had hardened herself against the girl's arrival, all she had meant to say fled when she saw Sidney's circled eyes and pathetic mouth.

'You child!' she said. 'You poor little girl!' And took her to her corseted bosom.

For the time at least, Sidney's world had gone to pieces about her. All her brave vaunt of service faded before her disgrace.

When Christine would have seen her, she kept her door locked and asked for just that one evening alone. But after Harriet had retired, and Mimi, the Austrian, had crept out to the corner to mail a letter back to Gratz, Sidney unbolted her door and listened in the little upper hall. Harriet, her head in a towel, her face carefully cold-creamed, had gone to bed; but K.'s light, as usual, was shining over the transom. Sidney tiptoed to the door.

'K.!'

Almost immediately he opened the door.

'May I come in and talk to you?'

He turned and took a quick survey of the room. The picture was against the collar box. But he took the risk and held the door wide.

Sidney came in and sat down by the fire. By being adroit he managed to slip the little picture over and under the box before she

saw it. It is doubtful if she would have realised its significance, had she seen it.

'I've been thinking things over,' she said. 'It seems to me I'd better not go back.'

He had left the door carefully open. Men are always more conventional than women.

'That would be foolish, wouldn't it, when you have done so well? And besides, since you are not guilty, Sidney——'

'I didn't do it!' she cried passionately. 'I know I didn't. But I've lost faith in myself. I can't keep on; that's all there is to it. All last night, in the emergency ward, I felt it going. I clutched at it. I kept saying to myself: "You didn't do it, you didn't do it"; and all the time something inside me was saying "Not now, perhaps; but some time you may."'

Poor K., who had reasoned all this out for himself and had come to the same *impasse*!

'To go on like this, feeling that one has life and death in one's hand, and then perhaps some day to make a mistake like that!' She looked up at him forlornly. 'I am just not brave enough, K.'

'Wouldn't it be braver to keep on? Aren't you giving up very easily?'

Her world was in pieces about her, and she felt alone in a wide and empty place. And, because her nerves were drawn taut until they were ready to snap, Sidney turned on him shrewishly.

'I think you are all afraid I will come back to stay. Nobody really wants me anywhere—in all the world! Not at the hospital, not here, not any place. I am no use.'

'When you say that nobody wants you,' said K., not very steadily, 'I—I think you are making a mistake.'

'Who?' she demanded. 'Christine? Aunt Harriet? Katie? The only person who ever really wanted me was my mother, and I went away and left her!'

She scanned his face closely, and, reading there something she did not understand, she coloured suddenly.

'I believe you mean Joe Drummond.'

'No; I do not mean Joe Drummond.'

If he had found any encouragement in her face, he would have gone on recklessly; but her blank eyes warned him.

'If you mean Max Wilson,' said Sidney, 'you are entirely wrong. He's not in love with me—not, that is, any more than he is in love

with a dozen girls. He likes to be with me—oh, I know that; but that doesn't mean—anything else. Anyhow, after this disgrace——'

'There is no disgrace, child.'

'He'll think me careless, at the least. And his ideals are so high, K.'

'You say he likes to be with you? What about you?'

Sidney had been sitting in a low chair by the fire. She rose with a sudden passionate movement. In the informality of the household, she had visited K. in her dressing-gown and slippers; and now she stood before him, a tragic young figure, clutching the gorgeous stripes of her gown across her breast.

'I worship him, K.,' she said tragically. 'When I see him coming, I want to get down and let him step on me. I know his step in the hall. I know the very way he rings for the elevator. When I see him in the operating-room, cool and calm while everyone else is flustered and excited, he—he looks like a god.'

Then, half ashamed of her outburst, she turned her back to him and stood gazing at the small coal fire. It was as well for K. that she did not see his face. For that one moment the despair that was in him shone in his eyes. He glanced around the shabby little room, the sagging bed, the collar-box, the pincushion, and the old marble-topped bureau under which Reginald had formerly made her nest, at his untidy table, littered with pipes and books, at his own tall figure, stooped and weary.

'It's real, all this?' he asked after a pause. 'You're not sure it's not just—glamour, Sidney?'

'It's real—terribly real.' Her voice was muffled, and he knew then that she was crying.

She was mightily ashamed of it. Tears, of course, except in the privacy of one's closet, were not ethical on the Street.

'Perhaps he cares very much too.'

'Give me a handkerchief,' said Sidney in a muffled tone, and the little scene was broken into while K. searched through a bureau drawer. Then:

'It's all over, anyhow, since this. If he'd really cared he'd have come over to-night. When one is in trouble one needs friends.'

Back in a circle she came inevitably to her suspension.

She would never go back, she said passionately. She was innocent, had been falsely accused. If they could think such a thing about her, she didn't want to be in their old hospital.

K. questioned her, alternately soothing and probing.

'You are positive about it?'

'Absolutely. I have given him his medicines dozens of times.'

'You looked at the label?'

'Swear I did, K.'

'Who else had access to the medicine-closet?'

'Miss Harrison carried the keys, of course. I was off duty from four to six. When Carlotta left the ward, the probationer would have them.'

'Have you reason to think that either one of these girls would wish you harm?'

'None whatever,' began Sidney vehemently; and then, checking herself, 'unless—but that's rather ridiculous.'

'What is ridiculous?'

'I've sometimes thought that Carlotta—but I am sure she is perfectly fair with me. Even if she—if she——'

'Yes?'

'Even if she likes Dr. Wilson, I don't believe—Why, K., she wouldn't! It would be murder.'

'Murder of course,' said K., 'in intention, anyhow. Of course she didn't do it. I'm only trying to find out whose mistake it was.'

Soon after that she said good-night and went out. She turned in the doorway and smiled tremulously back at him.

'You have done me a lot of good. You almost make me believe in myself.'

'That's because I believe in you.'

With one of the quick movements that was one of her charms, Sidney suddenly closed the door and slipped back into the room. K., hearing the door close, thought she had gone, and dropped heavily into a chair.

'My best friend in all the world!' said Sidney suddenly from behind him, and bending over, she kissed him on the cheek.

The next instant the door had closed behind her, and K. was left alone to such wretchedness and bliss as the evening had brought him.

On towards morning, Harriet, who slept but restlessly in her towel, wakened to the glare of his light over the transom.

'K.!' she called pettishly from her door. 'I wish you wouldn't go to sleep and let your light burn!'

K., surmising the towel and cold cream, had the tact not to open his door.

'I am not asleep, Harriet, and I am sorry about the light. It's going out now.'

Before he extinguished the light, he walked over to the old dresser and surveyed himself in the glass. Two nights without sleep and much anxiety had told on him. He looked old, haggard, infinitely tired. Mentally he compared himself with Wilson, flushed with success, erect, triumphant, almost insolent. Nothing had more certainly told him the hopelessness of his love for Sidney than her good-night kiss. He was her brother, her friend. He would never be her lover. He drew a long breath and proceeded to undress in the dark.

Joe Drummond came to see Sidney the next day. She would have avoided him if she could, but Mimi had ushered him up to the sewing-room boudoir before she had time to escape. She had not seen the boy for two months, and the change in him startled her. He was thinner, rather hectic, scrupulously well dressed.

'Why, Joe!' she said, and then: 'Won't you sit down?'

He was still rather theatrical. He dramatised himself, as he had that night the June before when he had asked Sidney to marry him. He stood just inside the doorway. He offered no conventional greeting whatever; but, after surveying her briefly, her black gown, the lines around her eyes:

'You're not going back to that place, of course?'

'I—I haven't decided.'

'Then somebody's got to decide for you. The thing for you to do is to stay right here, Sidney. People know you on the Street. Nobody here would ever accuse you of trying to murder anybody.'

In spite of herself, Sidney smiled a little.

'Nobody thinks I tried to murder him. It was a mistake about the medicines. I didn't do it, Joe.'

His love was purely selfish, for he brushed aside her protest as if she had not spoken.

'You give me the word and I'll go and get your things; I've got a car of my own now.'

'But, Joe, they have only done what they thought was right. Whoever made the mistake, there was a mistake.'

He stared at her incredulously.

'You don't mean that you are going to stand for this sort of thing? Every time some damned fool makes a mistake, are they going to blame it on you?'

'Please don't be theatrical. Come in and sit down. I can't talk to you if you explode like a rocket all the time.'

Her matter-of-fact tone had its effect. He advanced into the room, but he still scorned a chair.

'I guess you've been wondering why you haven't heard from me,' he said. 'I've seen you a good bit more than you've seen me.'

Sidney looked uneasy. The idea of espionage is always repugnant, and to have a rejected lover always in the offing, as it were, was disconcerting.

'I wish you would be just a little bit sensible, Joe. It's so silly of you, really. It's not because you care for me; it's really because you care for yourself.'

'You can't look at me and say that, Sid.'

He ran his finger around his collar—an old gesture; but the collar was very loose. He was thin; his neck showed it.

'I'm just eating my heart out for you, and that's the truth. And it isn't only that. Everywhere I go, people say, "There's the fellow Sidney Page turned down when she went into the hospital." I've got so I keep off the Street as much as I can.'

Sidney was half alarmed, half irritated. This wild, excited boy was not the doggedly faithful youth she had always known. It seemed to her that he was hardly sane—that underneath his quiet manner and carefully repressed voice there lurked something irrational, something she could not cope with. She looked up at him helplessly.

'But what do you want me to do? You—you almost frighten me. If you'd only sit down——'

'I want you to come home. I am not asking anything else now. I just want you to come back, so that things will be the way they used to be. Now that they have turned you out——'

'They have done nothing of the sort. I've told you that.'

'You're going back?'

'Absolutely.'

'Because you love the hospital, or because you love somebody connected with the hospital?'

Sidney was thoroughly angry by this time, angry and reckless. She had come through so much that every nerve was crying in passionate protest.

'If it will make you understand things any better,' she cried, 'I am going back for both reasons!'

She was sorry the next moment. But her words seemed, surprisingly enough, to steady him. For the first time, he sat down.

'Then as far as I am concerned, it's all over, is it?'

'Yes, Joe. I told you that long ago.'

He seemed hardly to be listening. His thoughts had ranged far ahead. Suddenly:

'You think Christine has her hands full with Palmer, don't you? Well, if you take Max Wilson, you're going to have more trouble than Christine ever dreamed of. I can tell you some things about him now that will make you think twice.'

But Sidney had reached her limit. She went over and flung open the door.

'Every word that you say shows me how right I am in not marrying you, Joe,' she said. 'Real men do not say those things about each other under any circumstances. You're behaving like a bad boy. I don't want you to come back until you have grown up.' He was very white, but he picked up his hat and went to the door.

'I guess I *am* crazy,' he said. 'I've been wanting to go away, but mother raises such a fuss—I'll not annoy you any more.'

He reached in his pocket and, pulling out a small box, held it toward her. The lid was punched full of holes.

'Reginald,' he said solemnly. 'I've had him all winter. Some boys caught him in the park, and I brought him home.'

He left her standing there speechless with surprise, with the box in her hand, and ran down the stairs and out into the Street. At the foot of the steps he almost collided with Dr. Ed.

'Back to see Sidney?' said Dr. Ed genially. 'That's fine, Joe. I'm glad you've made it up.'

The boy went blindly down the Street.

CHAPTER XX.

THE REBELLION.

WINTER relaxed its clutch slowly that year; March was bitterly cold; even April found the roads still frozen and the hedgerows clustered with ice. But at midday there was spring in the air. In the courtyard of the hospital, convalescents sat on the benches and watched for robins. The fountain, which had frozen out, was

being repaired. Here and there on ward window-sills tulips opened their gaudy petals to the sun.

Harriet had gone abroad for a flying trip in March, and came back laden with new models, model gowns, and fresh enthusiasm. She carried out and planted flowers on her sister's grave, and went back to her work with a feeling of duty done. A combination of crocuses and snow on the ground had given her an inspiration for a gown. She drew it in pencil on an envelope on her way back in the street car.

Grace Irving, having made good during the white sales, had been sent to the spring cottons. She began to walk with her head higher. The day she sold Sidney material for a simple white gown, she was very happy. Once a customer brought her a bunch of primroses. All day she kept them under the counter in a glass of water, and at evening she took them to Johnny Rosenfeld, still lying abed in the hospital.

On Sidney, K., and on Christine the winter had left its mark heavily. Christine, readjusting her life to new conditions, was graver, more thoughtful. She was alone most of the time now. Under K.'s guidance, she had given up the *Duchess* and was reading real books. She was thinking real thoughts, too, for the first time in her life.

Sidney, as tender as ever, had lost a little of the radiance from her eyes; her voice had deepened. Where she had been a pretty girl, she was now lovely. She was back in the hospital again, this time in the children's ward. K., going in one day to take Johnny Rosenfeld a basket of fruit, saw her there with a child in her arms and a light in her eyes that he had never seen before. It hurt him, rather—things being as they were with him. When he came out he looked straight ahead.

With the opening of spring the little house at Hillfoot took on fresh activities. Tillie was house-cleaning with great thoroughness. She scrubbed carpets, took down the clean curtains, and put them up again freshly starched. It was as if she found in sheer activity and fatigue a remedy for her uneasiness.

Business had not been very good. The impeccable character of the little house had been against it. True, Mr. Schwitter had a little bar and served the best liquors he could buy; but he discouraged rowdiness—had been known to refuse to sell to boys under twenty-one and to men who had already over-indulged.

The word went about that Schwitter's was no place for a good

time. Even Tillie's chicken and waffles failed against this handicap.

By the middle of April the house-cleaning was done. One or two motor parties had come out, dined sedately and wined moderately, and had gone back to the city again. The next two weeks saw the weather clear. The roads dried up, robins filled the trees with their noisy spring songs, and still business continued dull.

By the first day of May Tillie's uneasiness had become certainty. On that morning Mr. Schwitter, coming in from the early milking, found her sitting in the kitchen, her face buried in her apron. He put down the milk-pails and, going over to her, put a hand on her head.

'I guess there's no mistake, then?'

'There's no mistake,' said poor Tillie into her apron.

He bent down and kissed the back of her neck. Then, when she failed to brighten, he tiptoed around the kitchen, poured the milk into pans, and rinsed the buckets, working methodically in his heavy way. The tea-kettle had boiled dry. He filled that too. Then:

'Do you want to see a doctor?'

'I'd better see somebody,' she said, without looking up. 'And—don't think I'm blaming you. I guess I don't really blame anybody. As far as that goes, I've wanted a child right along. It isn't the trouble I am thinking of, either.'

He nodded. Words were unnecessary between them. He made some tea clumsily and browned her a piece of toast. When he had put it on the end of the kitchen table, he went over to her again.

'I guess I'd ought to have thought of this before, but all I thought of was trying to get a little happiness out of life. And,'—he stroked her arm—'as far as I am concerned, it's been worth while, Tillie. No matter what I've had to do, I've always looked forward to coming back here to you in the evening. Maybe I don't say it enough, but I guess you know I feel it all right.'

Without looking up, she placed her hand over his.

'I guess we started wrong,' he went on. 'You can't build happiness on what isn't right. You and I can manage well enough; but now that there's going to be another, it looks different, somehow.'

After that morning Tillie took up her burden stoically. The

hope of motherhood alternated with black fits of depression. She sang at her work, to burst out into sudden tears.

Other things were not going well. Schwitter had given up his nursery business ; but the motorists who came to Hillfoot did not come back. When, at last, he took the horse and buggy and drove about the country for orders, he was too late. Other nurserymen had been before him ; shrubberies and orchards were already being set out. The second payment on his mortgage would be due in July. By the middle of May they were frankly up against it. Schwitter at last dared to put the situation into words.

'We're not making good, Til,' he said. 'And I guess you know the reason. We are too decent ; that's what's the matter with us.' There was no irony in his words.

With all her sophistication, Tillie was vastly ignorant of life. He had to explain in detail.

'We'll have to keep a sort of hotel,' he said lamely. 'Sell to everybody that comes along and—if parties want to stay overnight——'

Tillie's white face turned crimson.

'I'll do no such thing.'

He attempted a compromise. 'If it's bad weather, and they're married——'

'How are we to know if they are married or not ?'

He admired her very much for it. He had always respected her. But the situation was not less acute. There were two or three unfurnished rooms on the second floor. He began to make tentative suggestions as to their furnishing. Once he got a catalogue from an instalment house, and tried to hide it from her. Tillie's eyes blazed. She burned it in the kitchen stove.

Schwitter himself was ashamed ; but the idea obsessed him. Other people fattened on the frailties of human nature. Two miles away, on the other road, was a public-house that had netted the owner ten thousand dollars profit the year before. They bought their beer from the same concern. He was not as young as he had been ; there was the expense of keeping his wife—he had never allowed her to go into the charity ward at the asylum. Now that there was going to be a child, there would be three people dependent upon him. He was past fifty, and not robust.

One night, after Tillie was asleep, he slipped noiselessly into his clothes and out to the barn, where he hitched up the horse with nervous fingers.

Tillie never learned of that midnight excursion to the 'Climbing Rose,' two miles away. Lights blazed in every window; a dozen machines were parked in the open space before the barn. Somebody was playing a piano. From the bar came the jingle of glasses and loud, cheerful conversation.

When Schwitter turned the horse's head back toward Hillfoot, his mind was made up. He would furnish the upper rooms; he would bring a barkeeper from town—these people wanted mixed drinks; he could get a second-hand piano somewhere. There would have to be a pool-table too.

Tillie's rebellion was instant and complete. When she found him determined, she made the compromise that her condition necessitated. She could not leave him, but she would not stay in the rehabilitated little house. When, a week after Schwitter's visit to the 'Climbing Rose,' an instalment van arrived from town with the new furniture, Tillie moved out to what had been the harness-room of the old barn and there established herself.

'I am not leaving you,' she told him. 'I don't even know that I am blaming you. But I am not going to have anything to do with it, and that's flat.'

So it happened that K., making a spring pilgrimage to see Tillie, stopped astounded in the road. The weather was warm and he carried his Norfolk coat over his arm. The little house was bustling; a dozen machines were parked in the barn-yard. The bar was crowded, and a barkeeper in a white coat was mixing drinks with the casual indifference of his kind. There were tables under the trees on the lawn, and a new sign on the gate.

Even Schwitter bore a new look of prosperity. Over his schooner of beer K. gathered something of the story.

'I'm not proud of it, Mr. Le Moyne. I've come to do a good many things the last year or so that I never thought I would do. But one thing leads to another. First I took Tillie away from her good position, and after that nothing went right. Then there were things coming on'—he looked at K. anxiously—'that meant more expense. I would be glad if you wouldn't say anything about it at Mrs. McKee's.'

'I'll not speak of it, of course.'

It was then, when K. asked for Tillie, that Mr. Schwitter's unhappiness became more evident.

'She wouldn't stand it,' he said. 'She moved out the day I furnished the rooms upstairs and got the piano.'

'Do you mean she has gone?'

'As far as the barn. She wouldn't stay in the house. I—I'll take you out there, if you would like to see her.'

K. shrewdly surmised that Tillie would prefer to see him alone, under the circumstances.

'I guess I can find her,' he said, and rose from the little table.

'If you—if you can say anything to help me out, sir, I'd appreciate it. Of course, she understands how I am driven. But—especially if you would tell her that the Street doesn't know——'

'I'll do all I can,' K. promised, and followed the path to the barn.

Tillie received him with a certain dignity. The little harness-room was very comfortable. A white iron bed in a corner, a flat table with a mirror above it, a rocking-chair, and a sewing-machine furnished the room.

'I wouldn't stand it,' she said simply; 'so here I am. Come in, Mr. Le Moyne.'

There being but one chair, she sat on the bed. The room was littered with small garments in the making. She made no attempt to conceal them; rather, she pointed to them with pride.

'I am making them myself. I have a lot of time these days. He's got a hired girl at the house. It was hard enough to sew at first, with me making two right sleeves almost every time.' Then, seeing his kindly eye on her: 'Well, it's happened, Mr. Le Moyne. What am I going to do? What am I going to be?'

'You're going to be a very good mother, Tillie.'

She was manifestly in need of cheering. K., who also needed cheering that spring day, found his consolation in seeing her brighten under the small gossip of the Street. The deaf-and-dumb book agent had taken on life insurance as a side issue, and was doing well; the grocery store at the corner was going to be torn down, and over the new store there were to be apartments; Reginald had been miraculously returned, and was building a new nest under his bureau. Harriet Kennedy had been to Paris, and had brought home six French words and a new figure.

Outside the open door the big barn loomed cool and shadowy, full of empty spaces where later the hay would be stored; anxious mother hens led their broods about; underneath in the horse stable the restless horses pawed in their stalls. From where he sat, Le Moyne could see only the round breasts of the two hills, the

fresh green of the orchard, the cows in a meadow beyond. Tillie followed his eyes.

'I like it here,' she confessed. 'I've had more time to think since I moved out than I ever had in my life before. Them hills help. When the noise is worst down at the house, I look at the hills there and——'

There were great thoughts in her mind—that the hills meant God, and that in His good time perhaps it would all come right. But she was inarticulate. 'The hills help a lot,' she repeated.

K. rose. Tillie's work-basket lay near him. He picked up one of the little garments. In his big hands it looked small, absurd.

'I—I want to tell you something, Tillie. Don't count on it too much; but Mrs. Schwitter has been failing rapidly for the last month or two.'

Tillie caught his arm.

'You've seen her?'

'I was interested. I wanted to see things work out right for you.'

All the colour had faded from Tillie's face.

'You're very good to me, Mr. Le Moyne,' she said. 'I don't wish the poor soul any harm, but—oh, my God! if she's going, let it be before the next four months are over.'

K. had fallen into the habit, after his long walks, of dropping into Christine's little parlour for a chat before he went upstairs. Those early spring days found Harriet Kennedy busy late in the evenings, and, save for Christine and K., the house was practically deserted.

The breach between Palmer and Christine was steadily widening. She was too proud to ask him to spend more of his evenings with her. On those occasions when he voluntarily stayed at home with her, he was so discontented that he drove her almost to distraction. Although she was convinced that he was seeing nothing of the girl who had been with him the night of the accident, she did not trust him. Not that girl, perhaps, but there were others. There would always be others.

Into Christine's little parlour, then, K. turned, the evening after he had seen Tillie. She was reading by the lamp, and the door into the hall stood open.

'Come in,' she said, as he hesitated in the doorway.

'I am frightfully dusty.'

'There's a brush in the drawer of the hat-rack—although I don't really mind how you look.'

The little room always cheered K. Its warmth and light appealed to his æsthetic sense; after the bareness of his bedroom, it spelled luxury. And perhaps, to be entirely frank, there was more than physical comfort and satisfaction in the evenings he spent in Christine's firelit parlour. He was entirely masculine, and her evident pleasure in his society gratified him. He had fallen into a way of thinking of himself as a sort of elder brother to all the world, because he was a sort of elder brother to Sidney. But Christine's small coqueties were not lost on him. The evenings with her did something to reinstate him in his own self-esteem. It was subtle, psycholological, but also it was very human.

'Come and sit down,' said Christine. 'Here's a chair, and here are cigarettes and there are matches. Now!'

But, for once, K. declined the chair. He stood in front of the fireplace and looked down at her, his head bent slightly to one side.

'I wonder if you would like to do a very kind thing,' he said unexpectedly.

'Make you coffee?'

'Something much more trouble and not so pleasant.'

Christine looked up at him a few moments. When she was with him, when his tall figure and steady eyes looked down at her, small affectations fell away. She was more genuine with K. than with anyone else, even herself.

'Tell me what it is, or shall I promise first?'

'I want you to promise just one thing; to keep a secret.'

'Yours?'

Christine was not over-intelligent, perhaps, but she was shrewd. That Le Moyne's past held a secret she had felt from the beginning. She sat up with eager curiosity.

'No, not mine. Is it a promise?'

'Of course.'

'I've found Tillie, Christine. I want you to go out to see her.'

Christine's red lips parted. The Street did not go out to see women in Tillie's situation.

'But, K.!' she protested.

'She needs another woman just now. She's going to have a child, Christine; and she has had no one to talk to but her husband Mr. Schwitter and myself. She is depressed and not very well.'

'But what shall I say to her? I'd really rather not go, K. Not'—she hastened to set herself right in his eyes—'not that I

feel any unwillingness to see her. I know you understand that. But—what in the world shall I say to her ?'

'Say what your own kind heart prompts.'

It had been rather a long time since Christine had been accused of having a kind heart. Not that she was unkind, but in all her self-centred young life there had been little call on her sympathies. Her eyes clouded.

'I wish I were as good as you think I am.'

There was a little silence between them. Then Le Moyne spoke briskly.

'I'll tell you how to get there ; perhaps I had better write it.'

He moved over to Christine's small writing-table and, seating himself, proceeded to write out the directions for reaching Hillfoot.

Behind him, Christine had taken his place on the hearth-rug and stood watching his head in the light of the desk-lamp. 'What a strong, quiet face it is,' she thought. Why did she get the impression of such a tremendous reserve power in this man who was a clerk, and a clerk only ? Behind him she made a quick, unconscious gesture of appeal, both hands out for an instant. She dropped them guiltily as K. rose with the paper in his hand.

'I've drawn a sort of map of the roads,' he began. 'You see, this—'

Christine was looking, not at the paper, but up at him.

'I wonder if you know, K.,' she said, 'what a lucky woman the woman will be who marries you ?'

He laughed good-humouredly.

'I wonder how long I could hypnotise her into thinking that.'

He was still holding out the paper.

'I've had time to do a little thinking lately,' she said, without bitterness. 'Palmer is away so much now. I've been looking back, wondering if I ever thought that about him. I don't believe I ever did. I wonder—'

She checked herself abruptly, and took the paper from his hand.

'I'll go to see Tillie, of course,' she consented. 'It is like you to have found her.'

She sat down. Although she picked up the book that she had been reading with the evident intention of discussing it, her thoughts were still on Tillie, on Palmer, on herself. After a moment :

'Has it ever occurred to you how terribly mixed up things are ? Take this Street, for instance. Can you think of anybody on it that—that things have gone entirely right with ?'

'It's a little world of its own, of course,' said K., 'and it has plenty of contact points with life. But wherever one finds people, many or few, one finds all the elements that make up life—joy and sorrow, birth and death, and even tragedy. That's rather trite, isn't it?'

Christine was still pursuing her thoughts.

'Men are different,' she said. 'To a certain extent they make their own fates. But when you think of the women on the Street,—Tillie, Harriet Kennedy, Sidney Page, myself, even Mrs. Rosenfeld back in the alley,—somebody else moulds things for us, and all we can do is to sit back and suffer. I am beginning to think the world is a terrible place, K. Why do people so often marry the wrong people? Why can't a man care for one woman and only one all his life? Why—why is it all so complicated?'

'There are men who care for only one woman all their lives.'

'You're that sort, aren't you?'

'I don't want to put myself on any pinnacle. If I cared enough for a woman to marry her, I'd hope to—But we are being very tragic, Christine.'

'I feel tragic. There's going to be another mistake, K., unless you stop it.'

He tried to leaven the conversation with a little fun.

'If you're going to ask me to interfere between Mrs. McKee and the deaf-and-dumb book and insurance agent, I shall do nothing of the sort. She can both speak and hear enough for both of them.'

'I mean Sidney and Max. Wilson. He's mad about her, K.; and, because she's the sort she is, he'll probably be mad about her all his life, even if he marries her. But he'll not be true to her; I know the type now.'

K. leaned back with a flicker of pain in his eyes.

'What can I do about it?'

Astute as he was, he did not suspect that Christine was using this method to fathom his feeling for Sidney. Perhaps she hardly knew it herself.

'You might marry her yourself, K.'

But he had himself in hand by this time, and she learned nothing from either his voice or his eyes.

'On twenty dollars a week? And without so much as asking her consent?' He dropped his light tone. 'I'm not in a position to marry anybody. Even if Sidney cared for me, which she doesn't, of course—'

'Then you don't intend to interfere? You're going to let the Street see another failure?'

'I think you can understand,' said K. rather wearily, 'that if I cared less, Christine, it would be easier to interfere.'

After all, Christine had known this, or surmised it, for weeks. But it hurt like a fresh stab in an old wound. It was K. who spoke again after a pause:

'The deadly hard thing, of course, is to sit by and see things happening that one—that one would naturally try to prevent.'

'I don't believe that you have always been of those who only stand and wait,' said Christine. 'Some time, K., when you know me better and like me better, I want you to tell me about it, will you?'

'There's very little to tell. I held a trust. When I discovered that I was unfit to hold that trust any longer, I quit. That's all.'

His tone of finality closed the discussion. But Christine's eyes were on him often that evening, puzzled, rather sad.

They talked of books, of music—Christine played well in a dashing way. K. had brought her soft, tender little things, and had stood over her until her noisy touch became gentle. She played for him a little, while he sat back in the big chair with his hand screening his eyes.

When, at last, he rose and picked up his cap, it was nine o'clock.

'I've taken your whole evening,' he said remorsefully. 'Why don't you tell me I am a nuisance and send me off?'

Christine was still at the piano, her hands on the keys. She spoke without looking at him:

'You're never a nuisance, K., and——'

'You'll go out to see Tillie, won't you?'

'Yes. But I'll not go under false pretences. I am going quite frankly because you want me to.'

Something in her tone caught his attention.

'I forgot to tell you,' she went on. 'Father has given Palmer five thousand dollars. He's going to buy a share in a business.'

'That's fine.'

'Possibly. I don't believe much in Palmer's business ventures.'

Her flat tone still held him. Underneath it he divined strain and repression.

'I hate to go and leave you alone,' he said at last from the door.

'Have you any idea when Palmer will be back?'

'Not the slightest, K. Will you come here a moment? Stand

behind me; I don't want to see you, and I want to tell you something.'

He did as she bade him, rather puzzled.

'Here I am.'

'I think I am a fool for saying this. Perhaps I am spoiling the only chance I have to get any happiness out of life. But I have got to say it. It's stronger than I am. I was terribly unhappy, K., and then you came into my life, and I—now I listen for your step in the hall. I can't be a hypocrite any longer, K.'

When he stood behind her, silent and not moving, she turned slowly about and faced him. He towered there in the little room, grave eyes on hers.

'It's a long time since I have had a woman friend, Christine,' he said soberly. 'Your friendship has meant a good deal. In a good many ways, I'd not care to look ahead if it were not for you. I value our friendship so much that I——'

'That you don't want me to spoil it,' she finished for him. 'I know you don't care for me, K., not the way I—But I wanted you to know. It doesn't hurt a good man to know such a thing. And it— isn't going to stop your coming here, is it?'

'Of course not,' said K. heartily. 'But to-morrow, when we are both clear-headed, we will talk this over. You are mistaken about this thing, Christine; I am sure of that. Things have not been going well, and just because I am always around, and all that sort of thing, you think things that aren't really so. I'm only a reaction, Christine.'

He tried to make her smile up at him. But just then she could not smile.

If she had cried, things might have been different for every one; for perhaps K. would have taken her in his arms. He was heart-hungry enough, those days, for anything. And perhaps, too, being intuitive, Christine felt this. But she had no mind to force him into a situation against his will.

'It is because you are good,' she said, and held out her hand. 'Good night.'

Le Moyne took it and bent over and kissed it lightly. There was in the kiss all that he could not say of respect, of affection and understanding.

'Good night, Christine,' he said, and went into the hall and upstairs.

The lamp was not lighted in his room, but the street light glowed

through the windows. Once again the waving fronds of the aïlanthus tree flung ghostly shadows on the walls. There was a faint sweet odour of blossoms, so soon to become rank and heavy.

Over the floor in a wild zigzag darted a strip of white paper which disappeared under the bureau. Reginald was building another nest.

CHAPTER XXI.

CARLOTTA BURNS A LETTER.

SIDNEY went into the operating-room late in the spring as the result of a conversation between the younger Wilson and the Head.

'When are you going to put my *protégée* into the operating-room?' asked Wilson, meeting Miss Gregg in a corridor one bright spring afternoon.

'That usually comes in the second year, Dr. Wilson.'

He smiled down at her. 'That isn't a rule, is it?'

'Not exactly. Miss Page is very young, and of course there are other girls who have not yet had the experience. But if you make the request—'

'I am going to have some good cases soon. I'll not make a request, of course; but, if you see fit, it would be a good training for Miss Page.'

Miss Gregg went on, knowing perfectly that at his next operation Dr. Wilson would expect Sidney Page in the operating-room. The other doctors were not so exigent. She would have liked to have all the staff old and settled, like Dr. O'Hara or the older Wilson. These young men came in and tore things up.

She sighed as she went on. There were so many things to go wrong. The butter had been bad—she must speak to the matron. The steriliser in the operating-room was out of order—that meant a quarrel with the chief engineer. Requisitions were too heavy—that meant going around to the wards and suggesting to the head nurses that lead pencils and bandages and adhesive plaster and safety-pins cost money.

It was particularly inconvenient to move Sidney just then. Carlotta Harrison was off duty, ill. She had been ailing for a month, and now she was down with a temperature. As the Head went

toward Sidney's ward, her busy mind was playing her nurses in their wards like pieces on a checkerboard.

Sidney went into the operating-room that afternoon. For her blue uniform, kerchief, and cap she exchanged the hideous operating-room garb: long, straight white gown, with short sleeves and mob-cap, grey-white from many sterilisations. But the ugly costume seemed to emphasise her beauty, as the habit of a nun often brings out the placid saintliness of her face.

The relationship between Sidney and Max had reached that stationary point that occurs in all relationships between men and women: when things must either go forward or go back, but cannot remain as they are. The condition had existed for the last three months. It exasperated the man.

As a matter of fact, Wilson could not go ahead. The situation with Carlotta had become tense, irritating. He felt that she stood ready to block any move he made. He would not go back, and he dared not go ahead.

If Sidney was puzzled, she kept it bravely to herself. In her little room at night, with the door carefully locked, she tried to think things out. There were a few treasures that she looked over regularly; a dried flower from the Christmas roses; a label that he had pasted playfully on the back of her hand one day after the rush of surgical dressings was over and which said: 'R, Take once and forever.'*

There was another piece of paper over which Sidney spent much time. It was a page torn out of an order book, and it read: 'Sigsbee may have light diet; Rosenfeld massage.' Underneath was written, very small: 'You are the most beautiful person in the world.'

Two reasons had prompted Wilson to request to have Sidney in the operating-room. He wanted her with him, and he wanted her to see him at work; the age-old instinct of the male to have his woman see him at his best.

He was in high spirits that first day of Sidney's operating-room experience. For the time, at least, Carlotta was out of the way. Her sombre eyes no longer watched him. Once he looked up from his case and glanced at Sidney where she stood at strained attention.

'Feeling faint?' he said.

She coloured under the eyes that were turned on her.

* Editor: R is the prescription symbol.

'No, Dr. Wilson.'

'A great many of them faint on the first day. We sometimes have them lying all over the floor.'

He challenged Miss Gregg with his eyes, and she reproved him with a shake of her head, as she might a bad boy.

One way and another, he managed to turn the attention of the operating-room to Sidney several times. It suited his whim, and it did more than that: it gave him a chance to speak to her in his teasing way.

Sidney came through the operation as if she had been through fire—taut as a string, rather pale, but undaunted. But when the last case had been taken out, Max dropped his bantering manner. The dressers were looking over instruments; the nurses were busy on the hundred and one tasks of clearing up; so he had a chance for a word with her alone.

'I am proud of you, Sidney; you came through it like a soldier.'

'You made it very hard for me.'

A nurse was coming towards him; he had only a moment.

'I shall leave a note in the mail-box,' he said quickly, and proceeded with the endless scrubbing of his hands which signified the end of the day's work.

The operations had lasted until late in the afternoon. The night nurses had taken up their stations; prayers were over. The dressers were gathered in the smoking-room, threshing over the day's work, as was their custom. When Sidney was free, she went to the office for the note. It was very brief:

'I have something I want to say to you, dear. I think you know what it is. I never see you alone at home any more. If you can get off for an hour, won't you take the trolley to the end of Division Street? I'll be there with the car at eight-thirty, and I promise to have you back by ten o'clock.'

'MAX.'

The office was empty. No one saw her as she stood by the mail-box. The ticking of the office clock, the heavy rumble of a dray outside, the roll of the ambulance as it went out through the gateway, and in her hand the realisation of what she had never confessed as a hope, even to herself! He, the great one, was going to stoop to her. It had been in his eyes that afternoon: it was there, in his letter now.

It was eight by the office clock. To get out of her uniform and into street clothing, fifteen minutes; on the trolley, another fifteen. She would need to hurry.

But she did not meet him, after all. Miss Wardwell met her in one of the upper halls.

'Did you get my message?' she asked anxiously.

'What message?'

'Miss Harrison wants to see you. She has been moved to a private room.'

Sidney glanced at K.'s little watch.

'Must she see me to-night?'

'She has been waiting for hours—ever since you went to the operating-room.'

Sidney sighed, but she went to Carlotta at once. The girl's condition was puzzling the staff. There was talk of T. R.—which is hospital for typhoid restrictions. But T. R. has apathy, generally, and Carlotta was not apathetic. Sidney found her tossing restlessly on her high white bed, and put her cool hand over Carlotta's hot one.

'Did you send for me?'

'Hours ago.' Then, seeing her operating-room uniform: 'You've been *there*, have you?'

'Is there anything I can do, Carlotta?'

Excitement had dyed Sidney's cheeks with colour and made her eyes luminous. The girl in the bed eyed her, and then abruptly drew her hand away.

'Were you going out?'

'Yes; but not right away.'

'I'll not keep you if you have an engagement.'

'The engagement will have to wait. I'm sorry you're ill. If you would like me to stay with you to-night——'

Carlotta shook her head on her pillow.

'Mercy, no!' she said irritably. 'I'm only worn out. I need a rest. Are you going home to-night?'

'No,' Sidney admitted, and flushed.

Nothing escaped Carlotta's eyes—the younger girl's radiance, her confusion, even her operating-room uniform and what it signified. How she hated her, with her youth and freshness, her wide eyes, her soft red lips! And this engagement—she had the uncanny divination of fury.

'I was going to ask you to do something for me,' she said shortly;

'but I've changed my mind about it. Go on and keep your engagement.'

To end the interview, she turned over and lay with her face to the wall. Sidney stood waiting uncertainly. All her training had been to ignore the irritability of the sick, and Carlotta was very ill; she could see that.

'Just remember that I am ready to do anything I can, Carlotta,' she said. 'Nothing will—will be a trouble.'

She waited a moment, but, receiving no acknowledgment of her offer, she turned slowly and went toward the door.

'Sidney!'

She went back to the bed.

'Yes. Don't sit up, Carlotta. What is it?'

'I'm frightened!'

'You're feverish and nervous. There's nothing to be frightened about.'

'If it's typhoid, I'm gone.'

'That's childish. Of course you're not gone, or anything like it. Besides, it's probably not typhoid.'

'I'm afraid to sleep. I doze for a little, and when I waken there are people in the room. They stand around the bed and talk about me.'

Sidney's precious minutes were flying; but Carlotta had gone into a paroxysm of terror, holding to Sidney's hand and begging not to be left alone.

'I'm too young to die,' she would whimper. And in the next breath: 'I want to die—I don't want to live!'

The hands of the little watch pointed to eight-thirty when at last she lay quiet, with closed eyes. Sidney, tiptoeing to the door, was brought up short by her name again, this time in a more normal voice:

'Sidney.'

'Yes, dear.'

'Perhaps you are right and I'm going to get over this.'

'Certainly you are. Your nerves are playing tricks with you to-night.'

'I'll tell you now why I sent for you.'

'I'm listening.'

'If—if I get very bad,—you know what I mean,—will you promise to do exactly what I tell you?'

'I promise, absolutely.'

'My trunk-key is in my pocket-book. There is a letter in the tray,—just a name, no address on it. Promise to see that it is not delivered; that it is destroyed without being read.'

Sidney promised promptly; and, because it was too late now for her meeting with Wilson, for the next hour she devoted herself to making Carlotta comfortable. So long as she was busy, a sort of exaltation of service upheld her. But when at last the night assistant came to sit with the sick girl, and Sidney was free, all the life faded from her face. He had waited for her and she had not come. Would he understand? Would he ask her to meet him again? Perhaps, after all, his question had not been what she had thought.

She went miserably to bed. K.'s little watch ticked under her pillow. Her stiff cap moved in the breeze as it swung from the corner of her mirror. Under her window passed and repassed the night life of the city—taxicabs, stealthy painted women, tired office-cleaners trudging home at midnight, a city patrol-wagon which rolled in through the gates to the hospital's always open door. When she could not sleep, she got up and padded to the window in bare feet. The light from a passing machine showed a youthful figure that looked like Joe Drummond.

Life, that had always seemed so simple, was growing very complicated for Sidney: Joe and K., Palmer and Christine, Johnny Rosenfeld, Carlotta—either lonely or tragic, all of them, or both. Life in the raw.

Toward morning Carlotta wakened. The night assistant was still there. It had been a quiet night, and she was asleep in her chair. To save her cap she had taken it off, and early streaks of silver showed in her hair.

Carlotta roused her ruthlessly.

'I want something from my trunk,' she said.

The assistant wakened reluctantly, and looked at her watch. Almost morning. She yawned and pinned on her cap.

'For heaven's sake,' she protested. 'You don't want me to go to the trunk-room at this hour!'

'I can go myself,' said Carlotta, and put her feet out of bed.

'What is it you want?'

'A letter on the top tray. If I wait my temperature will go up and I can't think.'

'Shall I mail it for you?'

'Bring it here,' said Carlotta shortly. 'I want to destroy it.'

The assistant went without haste, to show that a night assistant

may do such things out of friendship, but not because she must. She stopped at the desk where the night nurse in charge of the rooms on that floor was filling out records.

'Give me twelve private patients to look after instead of one nurse like Carlotta Harrison!' she complained. 'I've got to go to the trunk-room for her at this hour, and it next door to the mortuary!'

As the first rays of the summer sun came through the window, shadowing the fire-escape like a lattice on the wall of the little grey-walled room, Carlotta sat up in her bed and lighted the candle on the stand. The night assistant, who dreamed sometimes of fire, stood nervously by.

'Why don't you let me do it?' she asked irritably.

Carlotta did not reply at once. The candle was in her hand, and she was staring at the letter.

'Because I want to do it myself,' she said at last, and thrust the envelope into the flame. It burned slowly, at first a thin blue flame tipped with yellow, then, eating its way with a small fine crackling, a widening, destroying blaze that left behind it black ash and destruction. The acrid odour of burning filled the room. Not until it was consumed, and the black ash fell into the saucer of the candlestick, did Carlotta speak again. Then:

'If every fool of a woman who wrote a letter burnt it, there would be less trouble in the world,' she said, and lay back among her pillows.

The assistant said nothing. She was sleepy and irritated, and she had crushed her best cap by letting the lid of Carlotta's trunk fall on her. She went out of the room with disapproval in every line of her back.

'She burned it,' she informed the night nurse at her desk. 'A letter to a man—one of her suitors, I suppose. The name was K. Le Moyne.'

The deepening and broadening of Sidney's character had been very noticeable in the last few months. She had gained in decision without becoming hard; had learned to see things as they are, not through the rose mist of early girlhood; and, far from being daunted, had developed a philosophy that had for its basis God in His heaven and all well with the world.

But her new theory of acceptance did not comprehend everything. She was in a state of wild revolt, for instance, as to Johnny Rosen-

feld, and more remotely but not less deeply concerned over Grace Irving. Soon she was to learn of Tillie's predicament, and to take up the cudgels valiantly for her.

But her revolt was to be for herself too. On the day after her failure to keep her appointment with Wilson she had her half-holiday. No word had come from him, and when, after a restless night, she went to her new station in the operating-room, it was to learn that he had been called out of the city in consultation and would not operate that day. O'Hara would take advantage of the free afternoon to run in some odds and ends of cases.

The operating-room made gauze that morning, and small packets of tampons—absorbent cotton covered with sterilised gauze, and fastened together, twelve, by careful count, in each bundle.

Miss Grange, who had been kind to Sidney in her probation months, taught her the method.

'Used instead of sponges,' she exclaimed. 'If you noticed yesterday, they were counted before and after each operation. One of these missing is worse than a bank clerk out a dollar at the end of the day. There's no closing up until it's found!'

Sidney eyed the small packet before her anxiously.

'What a hideous responsibility!' she said.

From that time on she handled the small gauze sponges almost reverently.

The operating-room—all glass, white enamel, and shining nickel-plate—first frightened, then thrilled her. It was as if, having loved a great actor, she now trod the enchanted boards on which he achieved his triumphs. She was glad that it was her day off, and that she would not see some lesser star—O'Hara, to wit—usurping his place.

But he had not sent her any word. That hurt. He must have known that she had been delayed.

The operating-room was a hive of industry, and tongues kept pace with fingers. The hospital was a world, like the Street. The nurses had come from many places, and, like cloistered nuns, seemed to have left the other world behind. A new President of the country was less real than a new house-surgeon. The country might wash its soiled linen in public; what was that compared with enough sheets and towels for the wards? Big buildings were going up in the city. Ah! but the hospital took cognisance of that, gathering as it did a toll from each new story added. What news of the world came in through the great doors was translated at once into hospital terms. What the city forgot the hospital remembered. It took

up life where the town left it at its gates, and carried it on or saw it ended, as the case might be. So these young women knew the ending of many stories, the beginning of some; but of none did they know both the first and last, the beginning and the end.

By many small kindnesses Sidney had made herself popular. And there was more in it than that. She never shirked. The other girls had the respect for her of one honest worker for another. The episode that had caused her suspension seemed entirely forgotten. They showed her carefully what she was to do; and, because she must know the 'why' of everything, they explained as best they could.

It was while she was standing by the great steriliser that she heard, through an open door, part of a conversation that sent her through the day with her world in revolt.

The talkers were putting the anæsthetising-room in readiness for the afternoon. Sidney, waiting for the time to open the steriliser, was busy for the first time in her hurried morning with her own thoughts. Because she was very human, there was a little exultation in her mind. What would these girls say when they learned of how things stood between her and their hero—that, out of all his world of society and clubs and beautiful women, he was going to choose her?

Not shameful, this: the honest pride of a woman in being chosen from many.

The voices were very clear.

'Typhoid! Of course not. She's eating her heart out.'

'Do you think he has really broken with her?'

'Probably not. She knows it's coming. That's all.'

'Sometimes I have wondered——'

'So have others. She oughtn't to be here, of course. But among so many there is bound to be one now and then who—who isn't quite——'

She hesitated, at a loss for a word.

'Did you—did you ever think over that trouble with Miss Page about the medicines? That would have been easy, and like her.'

'She hates Miss Page, of course, but I hardly think— If that's true, it was nearly murder.'

There were two voices, a young one, full of soft Southern inflections, and an older voice, a trifle hard, as from disillusion.

They were working as they talked. Sidney could hear the clatter of bottles on the tray, the scraping of a moved table.

'He was crazy about her last fall.'

'Miss Page?' (The younger voice, with a thrill in it.)

'Carlotta. Of course this is confidential.'

'Surely.'

'I saw her with him in his car one evening. And on her vacation last summer——'

The voices dropped to a whisper. Sidney, standing cold and white by the steriliser, put out a hand to steady herself. So that was it! No wonder Carlotta had hated her. And those whispering voices! What were they saying? How hateful life was, and men and women. Must there always be something hideous in the background? Until now she had only seen life. Now she felt its hot breath on her cheek.

She was steady enough in a moment, cool and calm, moving about her work with ice-cold hands and slightly narrowed eyes. To a sort of physical nausea was succeeding anger, a blind fury of injured pride. He had been in love with Carlotta and had tired of her. He was bringing her his warmed-over emotions. She remembered the bitterness of her month's exile, and its probable cause. Max had stood by her then. Well he might, if he suspected the truth.

For just a moment she had an illuminating flash of Wilson as he really was, selfish and self-indulgent, just a trifle too carefully dressed, daring as to eye and speech, with a carefully calculated daring, frankly pleasure-loving. She put her hands over her eyes.

The voices in the next room had risen above their whisper.

'Genius has privileges, of course,' said the older voice. 'He is a very great surgeon. To-morrow he is to do the Edwardes operation again. I am glad I am to see him do it.'

Sidney still held her hands over her eyes. He *was* a great surgeon: in his hands he held the keys of life and death. And perhaps he had never cared for Carlotta: she might have thrown herself at him. He was a man, at the mercy of any scheming woman.

She tried to summon his image to her aid. But a curious thing happened. She could not visualise him. Instead, there came, clear and distinct, a picture of K. Le Moyne in the hall of the little house, reaching one of his long arms to the chandelier over his head and looking up at her as she stood on the stairs.

(To be continued.)

